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AMBATONAKANGA

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MIDNIGHT DANCE OF THE BÉTÀNIMÈNA.

Madagascar and its People.

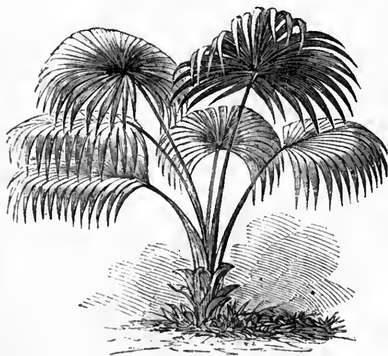
Notes of a Four Years' Residence.

WITH A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY, POSITION, AND PROSPECTS OF MISSION WORK AMONGST THE MALAGASY.

BY

JAMES SIBREE, Jun.

Architect of the Memorial Churches, Antanànarìvo.



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PREFACE.

In writing this book my object has been to describe, in a popular form, what is known respecting Madagascar,—its physical aspects, its animal and vegetable life, its people—their habits, language, and religious beliefs. I have introduced much which has been the result of personal observation; while, at the same time, I have not hesitated to avail myself of the labours of other writers, both French and English. It will be seen, therefore, that in two or three chapters, my task has been rather that of compilation than of original composition; and in these portions of the book I can lay claim to no other merit than that of industry in gathering information—in some cases from sources not easily accessible—which may help to give a more vivid picture of the country and its inhabitants.

It appeared to me that there was room for such a work, more especially at the present time, when Madagascar is throwing off the traditions of long centuries of superstition, and standing forward as a country "resting upon God." The religious progress of the island has already been described in detail by the Rev. William Ellis. I have therefore touched but lightly upon this most interesting portion of its history. I could not, however, leave it unnoticed, and I trust that the narrative I have given affords a truthful, though brief, representation of this wonderful story. While writing the latter part of the book, events have been in progress which have obliged me to modify and

alter some of the statements in the earlier chapters, in which I have described Malagasy life and society as I knew it nearly three years ago, rather than as it would be found at the present day. Still, I have endeavoured to bring my description up to date, aided by letters received from my friends at Antanànarìvo.

In carrying the work through the press I became conscious of occasional repetitions. This has arisen partly from the fact that the book has been prepared in brief intervals of leisure between periods of engrossing study; and partly because the exciting intelligence recently received from Madagascar has so hastened my return to that island, as to prevent the thorough and careful revision which I should have given to what I had previously written, had time been allowed. To this it must be added that every recent mail had brought additional information which needed to be incorporated with matter already in the printer's hands. I therefore crave the indulgence of my readers, and trust that the defects which are so obvious to myself, will be excused, if not entirely forgiven.

I have here to express my obligation to Mr. Ellis's "History of Madagascar," which is a mine of information on the subject, and which, for the period it covers, is the only trustworthy and complete English work yet published upon the country. I have made frequent quotations, which are, I believe, all duly acknowledged.

I also take this opportunity of thanking my friends, the Rev. W. Ellis, the late Rev. R. G. Hartley, M.A., Dr. Andrew Davidson, and Mr. John Parrett, for the use of several photographs which have been engraved to embellish the work.

J. S.

SPRING HILL COLLEGE, BIRMINGHAM:
Feb. 14th, 1870.

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CHRONOLOGICAL ARRANGEMENT

OF THE

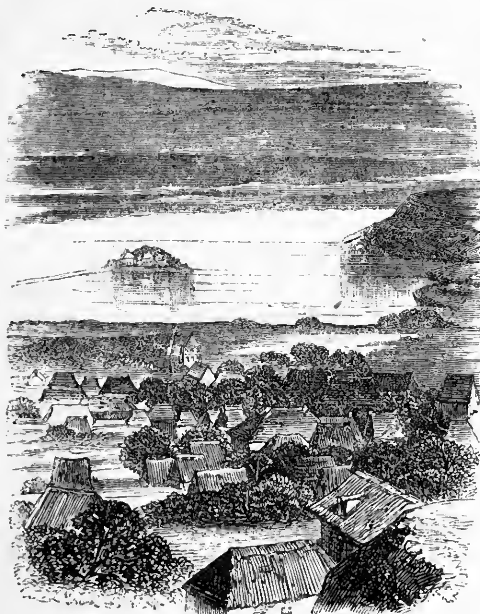
PRINCIPAL EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF MADAGASCAR.

Event		A.D.
Discovered by Lawrence Almeida, Portuguese Viceroy of India	..	1506
French colony founded at Lucia, in Anòsy	..	1642
English settlement at St. Augustine's Bay	..	,,
Robert Drury shipwrecked on the southern shores of the island	..	1702
And remained in the country as a slave until	..	1717
Destruction of piratical ships by a combined force of European men-of-war	..	1722
French settlement at Fort Dauphin, under M. Mandave	..	1768
Count Benyowsky landed at Antongil Bay to found a French colony	Feb.	4, 1774
Benyowsky killed by the French	..	1786
Andriambelomàsina, grandfather of Radàma I., supposed to have been king of Imérina at this time.		
Radàma I. born	..	1792
Andrian-impoin-imérina, father of Radàma I., died	..	1810
Proclamation issued by Sir Robert Farquhar, governor of Mauritius, taking possession of Madagascar, as a dependency of that island, formerly a French colony	..	1814
Captain Le Sage, agent of the British Government, visited Antanànarìvo to negotiate a treaty of friendship and commerce	Nov.	7, 1816

Event	A.D.
Treaty concluded between Radàma I. and Governor of Mauritius	Jan. 14, 1817
Revds. Messrs. Bevan and Jones, first Protestant missionaries, landed at Tamatave	Aug. 18, 1818
Mr. Jones, accompanied by James Hastie, Esq., British resident, arrived at Antanànarìvo, to commence a mission in the capital	Oct. 3, 1820
Treaty abolishing the slave-tràde concluded	Oct. 11, ,,
First school established at Antanànarìvo	Dec. 8, ,,
Missionary artisans arrived at the capital	May 15, 1821
First Christian church formed	Sept., 1822
Mr. Hastie died at Antanànarìvo	Oct. 8, 1826
Radàma I. died, and was succeeded by his queen, Rànavàlona	July 27, 1828
Coronation of Rànavàlona as queen of Madagascar	June 12, 1829
Attack by the French upon Tamatave	Oct. 14, ,,
First Malagasy Christians baptised	May 29, 1831
Christian soldiers forbidden to be baptised or to communicate	Nov., ,,
First English missionaries (Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson) ordered to leave the country	June 8, 1832
Great kabàry at Antanànarìvo, forbidding Christian worship and instruction, held on Sunday	Mar. 1, 1835
The last English missionaries (Messrs. Johns and Baker) left the capital	July, 1836
Rasalàma, the first Christian martyr, speared at Ambòhipòtsy	Aug. 14, 1837
Attack made upon Tamatave by a combined English and French force	June 13, 1845
Fresh outbreak of persecution; fourteen thrown from the rock at Ampàmarìnana, and four burnt alive at Fàravòhitra	Mar. 28, 1849
Rev. W. Ellis arrives at Antanànarìvo on a visit of inquiry and observation	Aug. 26, 1856
Attempted revolution through French influence, and subsequent banishment of Messrs. Laborde and Lambert, and Madame Ida Pfeiffer	June—Sept., 1857
Renewed persecution; many stoned to death; numbers put in chains, and about fifty subjected to the poison ordeal (tangèna)	July, ,,
Death of Queen Rànavàlona, and accession of Radàma II.	Aug. 15, 1861
Arrival of Mr. Ellis at the capital to reorganise the English Protestant mission	June 16, 1862
Coronation of Radàma II.	Sept. 23, ,,

	A.D.
Revolution; and assassination of Radàma. . . .	May 8-12, 1863
Accession of the Queen-consort Rabòdo as sovereign, under the title of Ràsohèri-Manjàka	May 12, ,,
Foundation-stone of Mission Hospital laid at Analakely .	Jan. 14, 1864
Foundation-stone of first Memorial Church laid at Ambàtonakànga	Jan. 19, ,,
Attempted political disturbance, and subsequent deposition of the prime minister, Ràinivòninàhitrìniòny, in favour of his brother Ràinilaiarivòny	May 18, ,,
S. P. G. Mission commenced at Tamatave . . .	Aug., ,,
Mission commenced in Vòhimàrina by Church Missionary Society	Nov., ,,
Treaty of commerce, also securing religious liberty, concluded between the English and Malagasy governments at Antanànarìvo	June 27, 1865
Mission Hospital opened for reception of patients . .	July 25, ,,
Indemnity of $240,000 paid by the Malagasy government to the French in compensation for the repudiated Lambert treaty	Sept., ,,
Arrival of Norwegian missionaries	Aug., 1866
Mission commenced at Andèvorànto by Church Missionary Society	Nov., ,,
Comte de Louvières, French commissioner, died at Antanànarìvo	Dec. 31, ,,
Memorial Church at Ambàtonakànga opened . . .	Jan. 22, 1867
Treaty of commerce, between American and Malagasy governments, signed at the capital	Feb. 14, ,,
New palace, called "Manàmpy-sòa," opened . . .	April 3, ,,
Visit of Queen Ràsohèrina and nearly 40,000 people to the eastern coast	June—Oct. ,,
Mission commenced by Society of Friends . . .	June, ,,
Death of Queen Ràsohèrina, and accession of Ramòma, under the title of Rànavàlona II.	April 1, 1868
Repeal of law forbidding stone or brick houses to be built within the city	June 17, ,,
Coronation of Queen Rànavàlona II.	Sept. 3, ,,
Memorial Church at Ambòhipòtsy opened, queen and court attending	Nov. 17, ,,
Marriage of the queen to Ràinilaiarivòny, prime minister .	Feb. 19, 1869
Baptism of the queen and prime minister by Andriambèlo .	Feb. 21, ,,
Bétsilèo province visited by Rev. C. Jukes . . .	June, ,,

		A.D
Antsianàka country visited by Rev. Joseph Pearse . .	June,	1869
Foundation-stone laid of Chapel Royal		,,
Kèlimalàza and the other national idols destroyed by order of government	Sept.,	,,
Consequent great extension of Christian influence and universal abandonment of idolatry in Imérina . . .	Sept.,	,,
Formation of Home Missionary Society	Sept.,	,,



RICE PLAINS.

MADAGASCAR
C. Amber
Diego Saurez B.
C.S Sebastian
Port Luquey or Lucas
Nos Beh
Passandava
Radama Is.
Nareenda B.
R. Vohimarina
15 S. lat
Majamba B.
Bembatooka B.
Boyanna R.
C St. Andrew
C. East
P. Baldrick
St. Marys I
L. Imanangora
NORTH
SAKALAVA COUNTRY
ANTSIANAKA
Foule P.
Tamatave
Ivondro
Mintaoka
Barren Isles
ANTANANARIVO
L. Itasy
HOVA
IMERINA
BETSIMISARAKA
R. Paracellas
Memoro P.
Mangourou R.
Crab I.
SOUTH SAKALAVA
BETSILEO COUNTRY
Fianarantsoa
Mananzary
C. St. Vincent
Murderers B.
R. St. Vincent
St. Augustines B.
Tropic of Capricorn
MAHAFALY
ANOSY
St. Luce B.
Ft. Dauphin
Barracouta Is.
P. Barrow
C. Ranevat
C. S. Mary
Route to the Capital
English Miles
25 50 100 150 200 250
45 E. long
50
MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL
INDIAN OCEAN

MADAGASCAR AND ITS PEOPLE.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY SKETCH.

Size of island—Discovery by Europeans—Portuguese and French attempts at colonisation—Physical geography—Climate.

MADAGASCAR, which has been termed the Great Britain of Africa, is situated on the south-east coast of that great continent. Its length of about 950 miles is from north to south, bending to the eastward at the northern extremity. The average breadth of the southern half of the island is about 250 miles; this increases towards the centre to 350 miles, from which it diminishes, northward, to a point, in the form of a long irregular triangle. Its total area exceeds that of the whole of Great Britain and Ireland, being nearly equal to that of France. It is distant about 300 miles from the nearest point of Africa, across the Mozambique Channel, while the Mascarene islands, Mauritius, and Réunion are respectively 550 and 450 miles to the eastward.

Madagascar was first visited by Europeans in 1506, when Lawrence Almeida, the Portuguese viceroy of India, touched at the coast on his way to the East. It had, how-

ever, been known to the Moors and Arabs for a long period previously, and a considerable commerce was carried on by them with the ports on the north-west coast. Information, more or less accurate, had also been collected about the country by early travellers, especially by the celebrated Marco Polo, by whom it is called *Magaster*.

Although the Portuguese made attempts to found a colony, their occupation of portions of the coast did not continue long. From the middle of the seventeenth century until a recent period the French have been most persistent in their efforts, not merely to colonise but to annex the island. Their pretended rights, however, have never had even the questionable justification of conquest. The military renown of France has received no addition on the shores of Madagascar, and their attempts to occupy the coast have had most unfortunate results. From private individuals of French origin, traders and planters, the country has at various times received much benefit, by the introduction of improved systems of cultivation, and instruction in the arts of civilised life; but the greatest impetus to its progress was given by the treaty of friendship made in 1817 between the native king, Radàma I., and the British Government. The effects of this treaty, in the abolition of the slave-trade, the consolidation of the Hova authority, and general advancement, are detailed in the following pages; as well as the remarkable results arising from the introduction of Christianity, which followed soon after the opening of the country to English influence.

The missionary history of Madagascar has indeed been its chief point of interest for the last forty years. In no country has Christianity had to contend more earnestly for its very existence—in none has it won a more signal triumph over all opposition. Yet even apart from this

religious history, few countries would prove more interesting to an explorer, to a naturalist, or to an ethnologist. There are not many parts of the world of equal extent of which so little is known. Large portions of the interior have never been visited by Europeans. Its physical features and geology are not yet understood, and its remarkable and exceptional animal and vegetable life have been but slightly investigated. Its inhabitants, although so near Africa in geographical position, are mostly Asiatic or Polynesian in origin; and their social habits and customs, language, and religious beliefs are very different from those of any other people.

Separated from Africa by the Mozambique Channel, which varies from 300 to 400 miles in width, Madagascar has but little in common with its vast neighbour; yet in two or three points there are analogies in the physical conformation of island and continent. There is the same flat, fertile, but unhealthy belt of maritime plain—the same rise by successive steps to elevated table-lands in the interior; while the rivers, although broad and deep at the mouths, are too frequently broken by rapids and rocky descents to allow of much uninterrupted navigation. A sandy bar at the entrance of many of the rivers, especially on the eastern coast, prevents them from being of much service as ports.

The surface of Madagascar rises at a comparatively small distance from the shore into ranges of hills, which increase in height as we proceed inland, until we arrive at a lofty backbone of mountains, stretching nearly the whole length of the island. These form the watershed of the country, and at the southern extremity approach the sea in bold cliffs of considerable height. They are not perfectly continuous, but there is no point where one can pass from east to west without crossing mountains.

Extending from the 12th to nearly the 26th degree of south latitude, the country lies chiefly in the tropics, and on the level plains of the coast-line partakes of a tropical character, both as regards climate and vegetation. But the elevated plateaux of the interior, raised between 4000 and 5000 feet above the sea-level, together with its insular position, give a temperate climate to a great portion of the island. There can be no doubt also that the south-east trade-wind, which blows over a large extent of Madagascar almost all through the year, has a great influence in tempering the tropical heat by cooler currents of air from the Southern Ocean; while the thousands of square miles of dense forest which cover the mountain ranges have a not less powerful effect on the climate, by attracting the moisture of the atmosphere, producing cloudy skies, and preventing rapid evaporation from the earth's surface.

In the northern parts of the island, and upon the coast generally, the heat is often very great during the summer months; but in Imérina and other elevated districts of the interior, the thermometer frequently falls during the night nearly to the freezing-point in the winter months of June, July, and August. At this time of the year, the heat in the daytime is that of ordinary summer weather in England, sometimes that of colder spring days; but in the hot season, the thermometer often stands at 120° to 130° in the sun. Notwithstanding this high temperature, the heat is not enervating or exhausting, probably owing to the dryness and rarity of the air. In the house, or even under the shade of a verandah, there is sometimes a difference of 40° or 50° between the heat under cover and the external air unprotected from the sun. It is only in the direct sunlight that the heat is much felt, and even a good sunshade will prevent this from being an inconvenience. At an altitude

of 4000 or 5000 feet above the sea-level, the atmosphere seems, from its rarity, to have less power to diffuse heat than it possesses at a lower elevation. To this inferior density is owing the fact that during the hottest part of the year the nights are almost always cool, much more so than in summer weather in England. As soon as the sun sinks below the horizon the heat absorbed by the earth is rapidly given off, and the temperature falls.

The seasons in Madagascar may be divided into two, as in most tropical countries: the rainy season, which is also the hot season, from November to April; and the cold and dry season, occupying the rest of the year. The rains are by no means continuous, nor without intervals of fine weather. They usually commence with a storm of thunder and lightning, are frequently accompanied by waterspouts, and descend with a volume and violence seldom seen in temperate climates. The morning and forenoon are generally fine, the rain coming on in the afternoon, and often continuing all through the night. During six months hardly any rain falls, except an occasional drizzling shower, more like mist than rain. Snow and ice are unknown in the island, but hoarfrost is occasionally seen on the higher hills. The thunderstorms are often accompanied by showers of hailstones, which are sometimes so large as to kill both men and cattle, and to destroy the rice-crops.

The soil of the valleys and many parts of the coast is fertile, and yields a very large return; it would support many times the present population. Aided by European skill and capital, almost every species of vegetable production of the tropics, and many of those of the temperate zone, could be cultivated. Coffee, sugar, rice, cotton, tobacco, and spices, all flourish, and will probably, at a not far-distant period, be largely grown for European markets.

Civilised and christianised, a great and important future opens up for Madagascar. It is not, perhaps, too much to hope, from their intelligence and mental capacities, that the people may take a prominent part in the regeneration of Africa, and thus help to solve the difficult problem of how best to reclaim that vast continent from barbarism.

Be this as it may, the country can never be regarded without interest by Englishmen, and especially by English Christians. To the religion and the civilisation introduced by their representatives, Madagascar owes its advances in the past and its hopes for the future; and whatever may be its history in years to come, we cannot doubt that the religion which stood its ground through thirty years of persecution will still largely influence its destiny, and eventually make its varied tribes a united and Christian nation.

CHAPTER II.

TAMATAVE; AND FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE COUNTRY.

First sight of Madagascar—Missionary history of the country—Port of Tamatave—Appearance of the town—Kind reception—M. Lambert and his company—Unwise policy of the late King Radàma—Difficulties with the French Government—Landing baggage—Bullock trade of Madagascar — Discontent amongst the foreign traders—Disorderly and lawless state of Tamatave—Native and other houses—Market and articles of food—Visit to governor—Palanquin-riding—The battery or fort—Military organisation of the country—Garrisons and posts—Preparations for journey—Visit from native Christians.

IT was on a bright morning in September, 1863, that I first came in sight of Madagascar. We had had a quick and pleasant voyage of three days from Mauritius, but I hardly hoped that daylight on Wednesday morning would reveal the country upon which my thoughts had been centred for many weeks past; so it was with a strange feeling of excitement that, soon after daybreak, I heard the captain calling to me down the hatchway, "We are in sight of land." Not many minutes elapsed before I was on deck, and looking with eager eyes upon the island which was to be my home for some few years, and whose religious history was then exciting an interest almost unparalleled in the Christian mind of England. We were about five miles from the shore, running under easy sail to the northward, and waiting until the breeze from the sea should set in and enable us to enter the harbour of Tamatave.

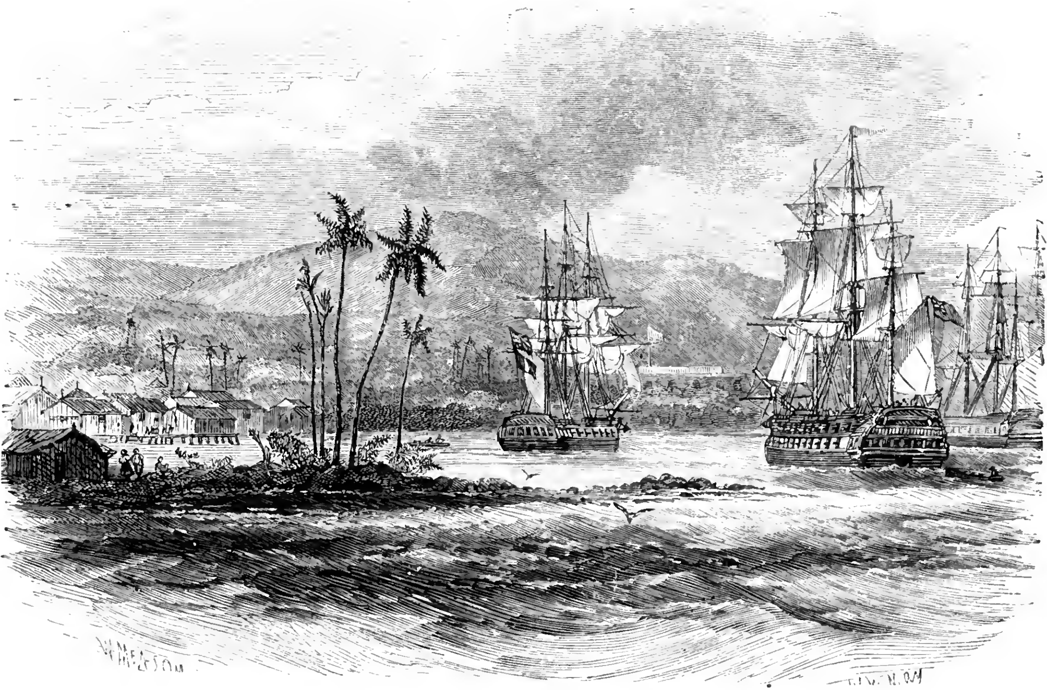
There was no very striking feature in the scene—no towering basaltic peaks, as at Mauritius and Bourbon; yet

it was not without beauty. A long line of blue mountains in the far distance, covered with clouds; a comparatively level plain extending from the hills to the sea, green and fertile with cotton and sugar and rice plantations; while the shore was fringed with the tall trunks and feathery crowns of the cocoanut palms which shaded the low houses of the town of Tamatave. These, together with the coral reefs forming the harbour, over which the great waves thundered and foamed—all formed a picture thoroughly tropical, reminding me of views of islands in the South Pacific.

But there was something more to interest than the mere external features of the scene before me. I could not but remember that the land which I then looked upon for the first time had been consecrated by a Christian devotion and heroism worthy of the best ages of the Church; and that within the last few years—one might almost say, months—numbers of faithful men and women had given themselves to cruel deaths rather than deny their Lord. And as I gazed upon that dim blue line of mountains, involuntarily the words of the hymn sung by the first missionaries who caught sight of Tahiti came to my mind:

> "O'er the gloomy hills of darkness,
> Look, my soul, be still and gaze."

But, again, I remembered that the reign of persecution had come to an end, that the people were now rejoicing in freedom of worship and belief, and that in some parts of the island, at least, the light of God's truth was chasing away heathen darkness and superstition. It may be smiled at as fanciful, but I took it as a good omen to see a rainbow stretching north and south over the distant hills; and as I looked upon "the bow in the cloud," the emblem of hope, I felt that there was hope for that land—hope for its yet



HARBOUR OF TAMATAVE.

heathen inhabitants, and hope and encouragement for myself in entering upon my arduous undertaking.

The harbour of Tamatave is formed by two coral reefs, enclosing an open roadstead, and somewhat difficult of access. The captain had told me that sometimes many hours and even days were spent in attempting to enter, and that it would probably be noon before we should anchor. I therefore went below to prepare for landing, but in less than an hour was startled to hear, by the thunder of the waves on the reef and the shouts of the seamen reducing sail, that we were already entering the harbour. The wind had proved unexpectedly favourable, and in a few minutes more, the cable was rattling through the hawse-hole, the anchor was dropped, and we swung round at our moorings.

There were several vessels in the harbour. Close to us was H.M.'s steamer *Gorgon*, and farther away, two or three French men-of-war—amongst them the *Hermione*, a frigate, bearing the flag of Commodore Dupré, their naval commandant in these waters, as well as plenipotentiary for the French Government in the disputes then pending concerning the Lambert treaty. I was somewhat relieved to find that everything seemed peaceful and quiet at Tamatave, and that the long white flag bearing the name of Queen Ràsohèrina, in scarlet letters, still floated from the battery or fort at the southern end of the town. I had been told at Mauritius that it was a foolish and hazardous adventure to think of proceeding to Madagascar just then; that the French admiral would probably be bombarding the town on my arrival, and that I should find the country in a most disturbed and unsettled state. Happily, these reports were as incorrect as most Mauritian accounts of Madagascar doings proved to be. M. Dupré was waiting

for answers to his despatches from the Hova government, and the good offices of the English consul had prevented any breach of friendly relations between the French and Malagasy authorities.

Tamatave had not an inviting appearance from the sea, and man's handiwork had certainly not added much to the beauty of the landscape. Had it not been for the luxuriant vegetation of the pandanus, palm, and other tropical trees, nothing could have been less interesting than the native town, which possessed at that time hardly any decent European residences, and no buildings erected for religious worship. Canoes, formed out of the trunk of a single tree, soon came off to our ship, but I was glad to be able to dispense with the services of these unsafe-looking craft, and to accept a seat in the captain's gig. Half an hour after anchoring we were rowing towards the beach, and in a few minutes I leaped upon the sand, with a thankful heart that I had been preserved from the perils of the sea, and was permitted to tread the shores of Madagascar.

Proceeding up what appeared to be the main street—a sandy road bordered by inclosures containing the stores of the European traders—we came to the house of the English vice-consul, Mr. Crueaux. Here I was glad to find Mr. Procter, the agent of the London Missionary Society, and also Mr. Plant, a gentleman employed by the authorities of the British Museum to collect specimens of natural history in this almost unknown country. From them I learned that a missionary party which had preceded me from Mauritius, and which I hoped to have overtaken, had left only two days previously for the capital, and that Mr. Plant had kindly engaged to accompany me on the journey for the greater part of the distance to Antanànarìvo.

At first we thought of setting off in the evening, so as to

overtake our friends; but finding that this would involve a great amount of fatigue, we finally decided to wait for two or three days, and take time to prepare for the novel experiences of a Madagascar journey. In a short time I was domiciled at Mr. Procter's, where I found a hospitable reception during my stay at Tamatave.

In the course of the day I called upon our consul, Mr. T. C. Pakenham, who explained the somewhat critical position of political relations then existing between the French and Malagasy governments. He told me that, though no action would be taken at present by the French commander, yet that he expected a force would be sent next year to compel the observance of the concession made by the late king to M. Lambert. I may here explain, for the benefit of those who are not well acquainted with recent Malagasy history, that this M. Lambert was a French gentleman, who had, during the reign of the late Queen Rànavàlona, obtained certain concessions from her, and established a sugar manufactory on the coast, in which he and the queen were partners and divided the profits of the undertaking. Having made himself of service to the queen he was frequently at the capital, and there ingratiated himself with the Prince Rakòto. A secret agreement was made between the prince and M. Lambert, by which most extensive privileges and landed property were made over to the latter, but these were of no validity so long as the queen lived. Upon the prince's accession to the throne as Radàma II., he unhappily allowed himself to be influenced by many unprincipled foreigners, as well as by some of his old companions. These men, by pandering to his passions, and leading him into habits of drunkenness and debauchery, alienated the confidence of the leading members of the government and the army, and

led him into acts which eventually cost him both his crown and his life.

M. Lambert did not delay pressing upon the young king the fulfilment of his engagements; and, against the advice of his best friends and wisest counsellors, a concession was made of extensive grants of land, rights of mining, control of coinage, felling timber, making roads, canals, and other public works. Now, although some of these things would doubtless have contributed to develope the resources of the country, and would have been of public benefit; yet the change from the exclusive policy of the late queen was too abrupt to be wise or desirable, while the jealous feeling with which foreigners were regarded was especially excited by the lands conceded to M. Lambert and the company he proposed to form. By old custom, having the force of a law, all the land in the country is theoretically vested in the sovereign, and foreigners could not purchase land, nor even rent it, without special permission. Yet this secret treaty made over the most valuable parts of the whole island to the French company; for all unoccupied lands near the chief ports, along navigable rivers, in the neighbourhood of forests, in positions suitable for pasturage and rice cultivation, and wherever it was thought there might be metallic and mineral riches, might be taken possession of by the officers of the company.*

Upon the accession of Queen Ràsohèrina, the Malagasy government, with much show of reason, notified to the French that they did not hold themselves bound by a secret agreement, disapproved of by the prime minister and all the leading nobles and officers, and likely to cause serious discontent amongst the people. The French, who for more

* "Compagnie de Madagascar. Rapport du Gouverneur du Conseil d'Administration sur la Fondation de la Compagnie," etc. (Paris, 1863).

than two hundred years past have been casting longing eyes upon Madagascar, gladly seized upon such a pretext for interference; and returned for answer that they should consider the matter as a *casus belli*, and enforce the agreement by taking possession of the ports of the country until its provisions were complied with.

Such was the position of affairs when I arrived at Tamatave. The good offices of Mr. Pakenham had, however, averted for the present the threatened reprisals of M. Dupré; while that officer probably felt that his threats might not be supported by his superiors at home, being in opposition to the understanding between the English and French Governments, that non-interference should be observed with regard to Madagascar. Although I am anticipating events, I may here add that the ambassadors sent by the native Government to England and France at the close of 1863 succeeded in arranging the dispute, and M. Lambert's concession was abandoned upon the payment of an indemnity of one million francs by the Malagasy. This exorbitant sum was paid almost solely by the queen herself, but it has left a feeling of irritation against the French in the minds of the people which will probably weaken for many years to come their influence in the country.

The afternoon of my first day on shore was occupied in seeing after the landing of my luggage. This was no easy or pleasant task; the long rolling swell from the Indian Ocean made the transfer of large wooden cases from the vessel to the canoes a matter requiring considerable dexterity. More than once I expected to be swamped, and that through the rolling of the ship the packages would be deposited at the bottom of the harbour. It was therefore with great satisfaction that I saw all my property landed in safety on the beach.

Although Tamatave is the chief port on the east coast of Madagascar, there are no facilities for landing or shipping goods. The bullocks, which form the staple trade of this place as well as of Foule Pointe, are swum off to the ships, tied by their horns to the sides of large canoes, and then slung on board by tackles from the yard-arm. The shipping, or rather canoeing, of these animals is quite *the* sight of Tamatave. From the shouting and cries of the native drovers, the struggles of the oxen, and their starting back from the water, it is often a very amusing and exciting scene. The *Phantom*, in which I crossed from Mauritius, was one of these bullockers, of which a number are almost always passing between the eastern ports of Madagascar and the islands of Mauritius and Bourbon, and keep the markets of these places supplied with excellent beef at very moderate rates. The vessels cease running for about four months in the early part of the year, when hurricanes are prevalent in the Indian Ocean. They are almost exclusively the property of the butchers of Mauritius, who form a powerful corporation, and are able to prevent any other vessel from intruding into the trade. As, with the exception of rice, bullocks form almost the sole export of this immense island, there is not sufficient trade to support any other vessels. It may easily be supposed that the passenger accommodation on board these ships is not of the first order, nor should any one venture on board who is not prepared to "rough it." However, compared with the discomforts endured by Mr. Ellis and other members of the mission, I had not much to complain of in my voyage to Madagascar. It had, at least, the negative merit of not lasting long, and I had not then the pleasure of having nearly three hundred oxen as fellow-passengers for about a fortnight, as on my voyage homewards. During the last

half-dozen years considerable quantities of gum-copal, bees-wax, and indiarubber have been collected on the coast, and from the richness of the country in medicinal gums and other vegetable products these exports might be indefinitely increased.

When I arrived at Tamatave there was much discontent amongst the foreign traders on account of the recent renewal of the customs duties—more especially as they were collected in a very vexatious and annoying manner, by taking a tenth of all imports in *kind* instead of in money, at the option of the custom-house officials. In a half-civilised government like that of the Hovas, things are often done in extremes; the policy of the late Queen Rànavàlona had been to restrict as much as possible all intercourse with foreign powers. When Radàma became king he went to the other extreme, throwing open the ports free of all duty. The consequence of this unwise act was widespread discontent on the part of the government officials, who were deprived of their means of support, and a fearful amount of drunkenness and profligacy, caused by the wholesale importation of rum by the Mauritius merchants. Again, on the accession of Queen Ràsohèrina the duties were reimposed, but in so arbitrary and capricious a manner as to make it difficult for the traders to carry on their business with any feeling of confidence.

When I landed in Madagascar the effects of the late king's foolish policy were still evident in the noisy and dissolute character of the population. During Radàma's short reign, Tamatave had proved a haven of refuge to great numbers of adventurers from Mauritius, Bourbon, and other places. People who were in debt found it a convenient asylum where they could set creditors and law alike at defiance, and everyone did that which was right

in his own eyes. Drunkenness, reckless shooting with revolvers, and disorders of all kinds, were everyday occurrences; and although much of this had been repressed by the exertions of the foreign consuls during the few months of the new queen's reign, the influence of the recent state of things had not altogether been removed. As an illustration of the character of some of the Tamatave traders of that time, I may mention that one of them, who was also the correspondent of a Mauritius daily paper, discharged a loaded revolver at a Malagasy whose daughter he had married. Fortunately he missed his aim, and the native escaped unhurt. But it will hardly be credited that the author of this reckless act had the impudence to insert in his next letter a sensational paragraph, describing the atrocious conduct of a Tamatave trader who had actually attempted the life of his own father-in-law!

The native houses at Tamatave, like most of the villages on this coast, are of very slight construction, being formed of a framework of wood and bamboos, filled in with the large broad leaves of the pandanus and the traveller's tree. In a few of these some attempts at neatness were observable, the walls being lined with a coarse cloth made of the fibre of the ròfia palm, and the floor covered with well-made mats of rice-straw. But the general aspect of the native quarter of the town was filthy and repulsive; heaps of putrefying refuse exhaled odours which made one desire to get away as soon as possible from its vicinity. In almost every second house a large rum-barrel, ready-tapped, showed what an unrestricted and unlicensed trade had done to demoralise the people.

I could not help noticing the strange articles of food exposed for sale in the little market of the Bètsimisàraka quarter. Great heaps of small locusts, dried and partially

roasted, seemed anything but inviting; nor were the numbers of minute freshwater shrimps much more tempting in appearance. With these were also plentiful supplies of manioc-root, rice of several kinds, potatoes, and other vegetables, some exclusively native, as well as the brilliant scarlet pods of different spices, and several varieties of fruit—pineapples, bananas, melons, peaches, citrons, and oranges. Beef, of course, was cheap as well as good, and there was a lean kind of mutton, more like goat's-flesh than the produce of our Southdown or Leicestershire sheep. Great quantities of poultry are reared in the interior of the country, and are brought down to the coast for sale to the ships trading at the chief seaports.

The houses of the Malagasy officials and the principal traders are more substantially built of wooden framework, with floors and walls of planking, and thatched with the broad leaves of the traveller's tree. One or two only were constructed of less combustible materials, and it was not many months after my visit that a large number of houses were destroyed by a fire, which swept away a great part of Tamatave. Since that time much of the town has been rebuilt, and many excellent houses and stores constructed, roofed with corrugated iron, and giving a much-improved appearance to the place. No stone can be obtained near Tamatave, nor can bricks be made, for the soil is nothing but sand; indeed the town is almost a peninsula, which has been thrown up by the sea under the shelter of the coral reefs which enclose the harbours.

The house where I was staying consisted of a single long room with the roof open to the ridge; a small sleeping apartment was formed at one corner by a partition of ròfia cloth. There was no window, but light and air were admitted by large doors, which were always open during

the day. A mattress, laid upon a long counter, formed a luxurious bed after the discomforts of a bullock-vessel. All around us, in the native houses, singing and rude music, with drumming and clapping of hands, were kept up far into the night; and these sounds, as well as the roar of the waves on the reef, and the excitement of the new and strange scenes of the past day, kept me from sleep until the small hours of the morning.

On the following day I went to make a visit to the governor of Tamatave, and pay my respects to him on arriving in the country. My host accompanied me, as I was totally ignorant of the language. As this was a visit of ceremony it was not considered proper to walk, so we went by the usual conveyance of the country—the *filanzàna*. This word means anything by which articles or persons are carried on the shoulder, and is usually translated "palanquin;" but the filanzàna is very different from the little movable house which is used in India. In our case it was a large easychair, attached to two poles, and carried by four active men, or *màromìta*, as they are called. They carried us at a quick trot; but this novel experience struck me as irresistibly ludicrous; it appeared so much like the play of children carrying each other about, that I could not restrain my laughter at the comical figure we presented—especially when I thought of the sensation we should make in the streets of an English town. The motion was not unpleasant, as the men are trained to keep step together. Every few minutes they change the poles from one shoulder to the other, lifting them over their heads without any slackening of speed. A few minutes brought us to the battery, a circular fort at the southern end of the town, of some two hundred feet in diameter. It is enclosed by earthen ramparts, about eighteen feet

ANDRIAMANDRÒSO, EX-GOVERNOR OF TAMATAVE.

high, pierced with embrasures for cannon. We had to wait for a few minutes until the governor was informed of our arrival, and thus had time to think of the revolting scene which this battery presented so recently as eight years before, when the heads of twenty or thirty English and French were exposed on poles around the fort. These ghastly objects were relics of the soldiers and sailors who were killed in an attack made upon Tamatave in 1845, by a combined English and French force, to redress some grievances of the foreign traders.

Presently, we were informed that the governor was waiting to receive us. Passing through the low covered way pierced in the rampart, we came into the open interior space of the fort. The governor's house, a long low wooden structure, was opposite to us, on the farther side; while, on the right, he was sitting under the shadow of a large tree, with a number of his officers and aides-de-camp squatting around him. They were mostly dressed in a mixture of European and native costume—viz., shirt and trousers, over which were thrown the ample folds of the native *lamba*, a large square or oblong piece of white calico or linen cloth, wrapped round the body, with one end thrown gracefully over the left shoulder. Neat straw hats of native manufacture completed their costume. The governor, whose name was Andriamandròso, was seated in a chair, dressed in English fashion, with a black silk hat and worked-wool slippers. He had a very European-looking face, dark olive complexion, and is an Andriana—that is, one of a clan or tribe nearly related to the royal family. He shook hands with us, and then ordered chairs to be brought for our accommodation. He did not speak English, but through Mr. Procter we exchanged a few compliments and inquiries. I assured him of the interest which the

people of England took in Madagascar, and their anxiety to see the country advancing. Presently, wine was brought, and after drinking the governor's health we took our leave. The Hova government maintains a garrison of two or three hundred men at Tamatave. These troops have their quarters close to the fort, in a number of houses placed in rows, and inclosed in a large square, or *rova,* formed of strong wooden palisades, with gateways.

The central government at the capital has a tolerably complete organisation of military posts and stations in almost every part of the island. Except in some districts at the extreme southern point of Madagascar, the Hova authority is virtually acknowledged throughout the whole country, although in the more distant provinces the allegiance of the people is more nominal than real. Still, however, tributes and presents are sent from very remote places, and the bearers of these take the oath of allegiance and fidelity to the sovereign. At all the seaports, and at every town of any importance, garrisons are posted, and are kept in frequent communication with the government by messengers, who take despatches and travel on foot for great distances without much apparent fatigue. In communicating with Tamatave the government runners will frequently accomplish the journey of 220 miles in a little over four days.

The following day was occupied in making preparations for the journey, purchasing a few of the most necessary articles of crockery, etc., and unpacking my canteen. This latter was a rather handsome-looking box made of teak, and fitted up with plates, dishes, knives and forks, etc. Mr. Plant being of opinion that both the box and several of the contents were far too good to be exposed to the rough usage they would have to undergo on the journey, I

took out some of the things and repacked the box in its wooden case. It is a mistake to get too expensive articles for such travelling as that in Madagascar, or to have the things so arranged that much time has to be spent in putting everything into its proper corner. Upon reaching the halting-place after a fatiguing journey of several hours, it is a great convenience to be able to get at one's baggage with the least possible amount of exertion; and when starting before sunrise in the mornings, it is not less pleasant to be able to dispense with an elaborate fitting of things into a canteen. By my friend's advice, I therefore bought a three-legged iron pot for cooking fowls, a frying-pan, some common plates, and a tin coffee-pot, which also served as a tea-pot when divested of its percolator. These things were stowed away in a straw mat bag, which proved the most convenient form of canteen possible for such a journey. The things were quickly put in, and as readily got out when wanted; and thus provided, we felt prepared to explore Madagascar from north to south, thoroughly independent of inns and innkeepers, chambermaids and waiters, had such members of society existed in this primitive country.

In the evening I had a visit from some members of the little Christian church at Tamatave, headed by the pastor, David Johns Andrianàdo. They came to bring a present of poultry and other provisions for the journey, and to express their satisfaction and gladness in welcoming us. The good people were delighted to inspect a photographic album, and to see the portraits of Queen Victoria and the Royal Family. This album proved of service on several occasions, for the exhibition of its contents was regarded as an ample return for the little acts of attention and kindness we received at the different villages on our route.

CHAPTER III.

JOURNEY TO THE CAPITAL—ALONG THE SEACOAST.

Travelling in Madagascar—Want of proper roads—Difficulty of journey through forests—Political reasons for inaction—Fears of foreign invasion—Beauty of the scenery—New forms of vegetation—Discomforts of journey—The màromìta, or bearers—The filanzàna, or palanquin—Leaving Tamatave—Route by seashore—Tropical plants—Orchids—Halting-places — Hivòndro — Houses on the coast—Canoes — Birds—The "bird liked by cattle"—The ox of Madagascar—Shells—Remarkable chain of lakes on east coast—Captain Rooke's explorations—Beauty of lake scenery—Pandanus and tangèna trees—Andrànokòditra—Hospitality of the Malagasy—Unhealthiness of coast — The Malagasy fever — Mortality in the first mission party — Madame Ida Pfeiffer—The "Hole of Serpents"—Insects and reptiles—Andèvorànto—The Aye-Aye—Enormous eggs of the Æpyornis.

TRAVELLING in Madagascar differs, probably, from that of every other country in the world. It is hardly necessary to say that railways are as yet unknown there; nor is it likely that the surveyor's level and theodolite, or the navvy's pick and spade, will disturb the solitude of its forests for another generation to come. But it is not so generally known that a road, in our sense of the word, does not yet exist in the island, and that all kinds of merchandise brought from the coast to the interior are carried for hundreds of miles upon men's shoulders. There are but three modes of conveyance; these are—walking, the *làkana* or canoe, and the *filanzàna* or palanquin. We intended to make use of all these means of getting over the ground (and water); but by far the greater part of the journey of 220 miles would be performed in the filanzàna, carried on the sinewy shoulders of our bearers, or *màromìta*. This is

the conveyance of the country, for there is not a single wheeled vehicle of any kind in this great island, nor did even a wheelbarrow ever come under my observation during the whole time of my residence there.

This want of means of conveyance arises in part from the fact, that if any vehicles existed they would be perfectly useless in the present condition of the tracks leading from one part of the country to another. The lightest carriage or the strongest waggon would be equally impracticable in parts of the forest where the path is almost lost in the dense undergrowth, and where the trees barely leave room for a palanquin to pass. Nor could any team take a vehicle up and down some of the tremendous gorges, by tracks which sometimes wind like a corkscrew amidst rocks and twisted roots of trees, sometimes climb broad sloping surfaces of slippery basalt—where a false step would send bearers and palanquin together into deep ravines far below—and again are lost in sloughs of adhesive clay, in which the bearers at times sink to the waist, and when the traveller has to leap from the back of one man to another to reach firm standing ground. Shaky bridges of primitive construction, often consisting of but a single tree, are frequently the only means of crossing the streams; while more often they have to be forded, one of the men going cautiously in advance to test the depth of the water. It occasionally happened that this pioneer suddenly disappeared, through coming to a hole which took him overhead, affording us and his companions a good deal of merriment at his expense. There are some thirty or forty horses at the capital, but these are not used for long journeys, and are chiefly ridden at the reviews of troops and in state processions—never for purposes of draught. Indeed, he would be a bold horseman who would ventura

to ride an animal through the forest of Anàlamazàotra, or along other parts of the route from the eastern coast to Antanànarìvo.

It will be asked, why does not the government improve the means of communication? The neglect has been intentional on the part of the rulers of Madagascar, for it is evident to everyone who has travelled along the road that it could be very much improved at a small expense. The Malagasy have justly considered that the difficulty of the route into the interior would be a formidable obstacle to an invasion by a European Power, and have deliberately allowed the path to remain as rugged as it is by nature. The long-continued attempts of the French to obtain an occupation in Madagascar have produced a deep-rooted jealousy of foreigners, and this feeling extends, in some measure, to the English as well, for they have heard how gradual encroachments have obtained for us our extensive Indian empire. The first Radàma is reported to have said, when told of the military genius of the French soldiery, that he had two officers in his service, General Hàzo and General Tàzo (that is, Forest and Fever), whom he would match against any European commander. It is even said that the route from Tamatave to the capital was altered during the reign of the late Queen Rànavàlona, and diverted to a more difficult part of the country, in order that the few Europeans who did penetrate to the capital might be impressed with an idea of the great difficulties to be overcome in reaching the centre of Hova authority. This is very probably correct. On my homeward journey I felt convinced that frequently a less rugged path might have been taken, and some of the steeper hills altogether avoided. There can be no doubt that the present road would present formidable obstacles to the passage of dis-

ciplined troops, and at many points it might be successfully contested by a small number of men well acquainted with the locality.

It will be evident, therefore, that travelling in Madagascar has not a little of adventure and novelty connected with it. Provided the weather be moderately fine, there is enough of freshness, and often of amusing incident, to render the journey not unenjoyable, especially if travelling in a party; and even to a solitary traveller there is such a variety of scenery, and so many new and beautiful forms of vegetation, to arrest the attention, that it is by no means monotonous or fatiguing. Of course there must be a capacity for "roughing it," and for turning the very discomforts into sources of amusement. We must not be too much horrified at a superabundance of fleas or mosquitoes in the houses, nor be frightened out of sleep by the scampering of rats around and occasionally upon us. It sometimes happens, too, that a centipede or a scorpion has to be dislodged from under the mats upon which we are about to lay our mattresses, but a moderate amount of caution will prevent any risk of real danger.

It must be confessed, however, that if the weather proves unfavourable, the discomforts are great, and require a resolute effort to look at the bright side of things. To travel for hours in the rain, with the bearers slipping about in the stiff adhesive clay—now sinking to the knees in a slough in the hollows, and then painfully toiling up the rugged ascents—with a chance of being benighted in the middle of the forest, are not enjoyable incidents in the journey. But by travelling at the proper time of the year, and with ordinary care in arranging the different stages, there need not be much fear of any more discomfort than that inseparable from the unavoidable fatigue.

Soon after breakfast on the morning of the 3rd of October, the yard of Mr. Procter's house was filled with the bearers waiting to take their packages, and as more came than we actually required there was a good deal of noise and confusion until all the luggage had been apportioned. The Malagasy word for these bearers is *màromìta*, meaning literally "many fordings"—a not inappropriate description of the kind of travelling they are constantly engaged in. The men are mostly young, and belong chiefly to one tribe, called the Bézànozàno, who inhabit the province of Ankày, a district situated between Ankòva and the east coast. This tribe was reduced to subjection by Radàma I., and instead of paying taxes the duty of carrying all goods required by the government between the coast and the capital was imposed upon them. Most of my màromìta were strong and active young men, spare and lithe of limb, and proved to possess great powers of endurance. The loads they carry are not very heavy, but it is astonishing to see with what steady patience they bear them hour after hour under a burning sun, and up and down the paths in the forest, where their progress is often but a scrambling from one foothold to another. Two men will take a load of between eighty and ninety pounds, slung upon a bamboo, between them; and this is the most economical way of carrying goods, for, on account of the difficulty of the paths, four men find it more fatiguing to carry in one package a weight which, divided into two, could be easily borne by two sets of bearers.

Eight of the strongest and most active young men, accustomed to work together, were chosen to carry my palanquin. These were divided into two sets of four each, and took the duty alternately. Most of the articles of baggage were carried by two men; but my large flat wooden cases, containing drawing boards, paper, and

instruments, required four men each. The palanquin, or filanzàna, for personal use, only has a double set of bearers, everything else being carried by the same men throughout the whole journey, without any relay or change, except shifting the pole from one shoulder to the other. The personal bearers, however, travel quicker than those carrying luggage, and generally arrive at the halting-places an

PALANQUIN TRAVELLING.

hour or more before the others come up. Each case was fixed to a strong pole or poles of bamboo, sometimes by cords, but more frequently by the strong tough tendrils of different climbing-plants. The hollow of the bamboo served for carrying salt, spoons, and various little properties of the màromìta, and sometimes small articles of European make for selling at the capital. The men are very expert

in packing and securing goods committed to their charge. Prints, calicoes, and similar materials are often covered with the leaves of the *vacoa*, a species of pandanus, and are made perfectly impervious to the wet; and even sugar and salt are carried in the same way through mist and rain without damage.

As the conveyance of myself and baggage required more than thirty men, and Mr. Plant took a dozen in addition for his own use, it was some time before everything was arranged, and there was a good deal of contention as to who should get the lightest and most convenient packages to carry. We had hoped to start early in the forenoon, but it was after one o'clock when we sent off the last cases, and I stepped into my filanzàna to commence the novel experience of a journey in Madagascar. We made quite a large party as we set off through the streets of Tamatave and turned southwards into the open country. The rear was brought up by a màromìte of some intelligence and experience, who carried nothing but a spear, and who was to act as captain over the rest. His duties were to see after the whole of the luggage, to take care that everyone had his proper load, and to make arrangements generally for houses and accommodation on the way.

My filanzàna was a different kind of thing from the chair in which I had gone to visit the governor. It was of the same description as that commonly used by Malagasy ladies—an oblong shallow basket, with light wooden framework, and filled in with a kind of plaited material made of strips of sheepskin, and carried by poles of strong light wood. In this I sat, legs stretched out at full length, a piece of board fixed as a rest for the back, and the whole made as comfortable as possible by means of cushions and rugs. There was plenty of space in the

filanzàna for extra clothes, waterproof coat, telescope, books, etc. When ladies travel any distance in this kind of filanzàna, a hood of coarse ròfia cloth is fixed, so as to draw over the head and to protect from the sun and rain. In my case a stout umbrella served instead, and a piece of waterproof cloth protected me tolerably well from the little rain which fell on the journey. The engraving shows the usual style of filanzàna used by men for short journeys. It is a much simpler kind of contrivance than the ladies' carriage, and consists merely of two stout poles held together by a couple of iron bars, and with a piece of untanned hide or strong cloth stretched between them for a seat. Sometimes a piece of board is suspended by rope to serve as a foot-rest, and a light iron framework is added as a support for the back and arms. My companion's filanzàna was of the latter kind, and in some parts of the journey was much more conveniently carried than my larger and more cumbrous conveyance.

It was a fine warm day as we set off, the temperature not being higher than that of ordinary summer weather in England. Our course lay due south, at no great distance from the sea, the roar of whose waves we could hear distinctly all through the first stage of the journey. In proceeding from Tamatavo to Antanànarìvo the road does not lead immediately into the interior, but follows the coast for nearly seventy miles southward. Upon reaching Andèvorànto we leave the sea, and strike directly westward into the heart of the island, ascending the river Iharòka for nearly twenty miles before crossing the mountain-chain or penetrating the great forest. Leaving the huts of the Bétsimisàraka quarter on the left, and the battery on our right, we soon left Tamatave behind us and got out into the open country. Our men took us this first day's journey of

nine or ten miles at a quick walk or trot for the whole way, without any apparent fatigue. The road—which is a mere footpath, or rather several footpaths, on a grassy undulating plain—was bounded for some miles on one side by trees, and on the other by low bushes and shrubs. Besides the cocoanut palms and the broad-leaved bananas, which were not very numerous here, the most striking trees to a foreigner were the agave, with long spear-shaped prickly leaves on a high trunk, and another very similar in form, but without any stem—both of which might be counted in thousands. I also noticed numbers of the parasitical orchids growing on the trees, especially the *Angræcum superbum* and *A. sesquipedale*, which were just then past the flowering; another small orchid, with pretty white flowers, was also very abundant. The large plants had recently fetched a high price in England, one species as much as £50 for a single specimen.

I had enough to do to examine these new forms of vegetation, as well as the birds, butterflies, and other insects which crossed our path every moment, until we arrived at Hivòndro, a large straggling village upon a fine river of the same name, which here unites with several other smaller streams and falls into the sea. We had intended to have gone on to Trànomàro, a village about a dozen miles farther; but finding that, through being late in starting, we could not get there until after dark, we decided to stop at Hivòndro for the night. One house at most of the villages upon the road to the capital is provided for travellers, who take possession at once, paying nothing for its use. The house here, which was somewhat better than at most of the other stations, consisted, like all the dwellings in this part of the country, of a framework of timber poles, thatched with the leaves of the traveller's tree, and the walls of a kind of lathing made of cane or reeds. The

ewalls and floor were here both covered with matting mad of fibre from the leaves of the ròfia palm. In one corner is the fireplace, merely a yard and a half square of sand and earth, with half-a-dozen large stones for supporting the cooking utensils. The provision for a chimney was very simple, being only a hole in the gable.

Our men soon came up with the luggage, and proceeded to get out our kitchen arrangements, make a fire, put on pots and pans; and in a short time, beef, fowls, and soup were being prepared. Meanwhile Mr. Plant and I walked down to the sea and then into the village, to call upon a French creole trader, who was the only European resident in the place. We brought him back with us, and found dinner all ready on our return to the house. My large case of drawing-boards formed, when turned upside-down and laid upon other boxes, an excellent table; we sat round on other packages, and found that one of our bearers, who officiated as cook, was capable of preparing a very fair dinner; and although the surroundings were decidedly primitive, we enjoyed it all the more for its novelty. Our friend amused us much by telling us funny stories, in imperfect English, of various people—English, French, German, and other adventurers, with whom he and others at Tamatave had been pestered at various times since the accession of Radàma and the opening of the country to Europeans—fully confirming what I had previously heard as to the "rowdy" character of many of the foreign residents. After our visitor had left us we prepared to sleep; three or four boxes, with my mattress and clothes-bag, formed a luxurious bed for myself, while Mr. Plant lay on the floor, but found some minute occupants of the house so very active that his sleep was considerably disturbed.

Next morning we were up before daybreak, and after a

cup of coffee started a little before six o'clock. We walked down to the river, which had to be crossed, and embarked with our baggage in seven canoes. These canoes, like those at Tamatave, are somewhat rude contrivances, hollowed out of a single tree called the *varongy*. They are sometimes from thirty to forty feet in length, and upwards of four feet in depth and width. There is no keel, so that they are rather apt to capsize if incautiously loaded. At each end a kind of projecting beak is made, pierced with a hole for attaching a mooring-rope. From the smoothness of the sides, and the great length compared with the beam, they can be propelled with considerable speed with far less exertion than is required to move a boat of European construction. The natives use paddles shaped like a wooden shovel. These they dig into the water, holding them vertically, and giving a reverse motion to the upper part of the handle. We went about a couple of miles up the stream, which here unites with several others, forming islands, the banks being covered with luxuriant vegetation dipping down into the water. Conspicuous amongst this was an immense waterlily, which occurred in great numbers. After about twenty minutes' paddling we landed, and, when all our fleet arrived, mounted our palanquins, and set off through a narrow path in the woods skirting the river. The morning air, even upon this tropical coast, was quite keen, making an overcoat necessary before the sun got up.

Our road for some miles lay along cleared forest, with stumps of trees and charred trunks, white and black, in every direction. They have a custom here of burning the trees, that is, the leaves and smaller branches, leaving the trunks white and bare. This is said to be as effective as seasoning the timber. We saw numbers of a large crow, not

perfectly black like our English species, but with a broadish white ring round the neck, giving them quite a clerical air. There were also many of the *vòrom-pòtsy* (white bird), also called *vòron-tian'-òmby*, that is, "bird liked by cattle," from their following the herds to feed upon the insects which annoy them. Wherever the animals were feeding these birds might be seen in numbers proportionate to those of the cattle. The oxen of Madagascar differ from the European species in having very long horns, and a large hump between the shoulders. In other respects their appearance is the same, and the quality and flavour of the flesh almost identical with that of English beef. The hump, which consists chiefly of a marrow-like fat, is considered a great delicacy by the Malagasy. When the animal is in poor condition the hump is much diminished in size, being, like that of the camel, apparently absorbed into the system. It then droops partly over the shoulders. Great numbers of oxen are fattened for several months before the national festival is held.

We reached Trànomàro at half-past nine, and there breakfasted. My bearers were a set of most merry, willing, good-tempered fellows. As soon as they got near to the halting-places they would set off at a quick run, and with shouts and cries carry me through the village in grand style, making a great commotion in the place. This village does not bear out its name, which means "many houses," for there were not a score of houses in the place. Leaving again at noon, in a few minutes we came down to the sea, the path being close to the waves, which were rolling in from the broad expanse of the Indian Ocean. I was amused by the hundreds of little red crabs, about three inches long, taking their morning bath or watching at the mouth of their holes, down

which they dived instantaneously at our approach. I was disappointed in not seeing shells of any size or beauty. The only ones which differed from those found on our shores were a small bivalve of an exquisite bluish-purple hue, and an almost transparent whorled shell, resembling the volute of an Ionic capital, but so fragile that it was difficult to find a perfect specimen.

After some time we left the shore and proceeded through the forest, skirting one of those lakes which run parallel with the coast nearly all the way from Tamatave to Andèvorànto. These lakes on the east coast of Madagascar are a peculiarity of geographical arrangement which is, probably, found in no other country. They follow the line of coast not merely between Tamatave and Andèvorànto, but also for more than 300 miles to the south of the latter place, and vary in distance from the sea from a few hundred yards to four or five miles. The scenery of this coast is of a very varied and beautiful nature, and the combinations of wood and water present a series of pictures which constantly recalled to me some of the loveliest landscapes that English river and lake scenery can present. Our route ran for most of the way between the lakes and the sea. Occasionally a good part of this journey is performed by canoes, but as the lakes are not perfectly continuous there is a frequent change to the palanquin, and a chance of delay in procuring canoes at each fresh sheet of water.

A few months after my arrival in Madagascar, my friend Mr. Plant, together with Captain Rooke, R.A.,* and some other English officers from Mauritius, explored this re-

* See Proceedings of Royal Geographical Society for 1866: "A Boat Voyage along the Coast Lakes of Madagascar," by Captain W. Rooke, R.A., F.R.G.S.

PANDANUS TREES.

markable chain of lakes for upwards of 250 miles south of Tamatave. They had a boat constructed for the purpose at Port Louis, and made light enough to admit of portage for a moderate distance between each fresh sheet of water. They found that so nearly continuous were the lakes that only thirty miles of the whole distance was performed on land in passing from one to the other. It is evident, therefore, how easily they might be connected by canals, so as to form a complete water-communication along a great part of the eastern coast. This work was actually commenced by Radàma I., but, like many other of his statesmanlike and enlightened projects, was interrupted by his death, and has never since been resumed. Under the native chief Coroller, several thousand men were employed in connecting the lakes near Tamatave; and there can be no doubt that if confidence is restored, and the country relieved from fears of foreign interference, an enlightened policy will take up this work, and thus give a most important impulse to the trade of the east coast. Captain Rooke and his party did not proceed to the southern extremity of this chain of lakes, on account of the illness of some of the party, and the uncertainty of the friendly character of the people so far south; but they learned enough to show that the lakes extended a considerable distance beyond the point they reached.

This coast scenery was in many parts exquisitely beautiful, the shores being fringed with virgin forest, and numerous islands studding the surface of the water. I noticed thousands of a picturesque tree along the banks—a species of pandanus, with large roots above the ground, seemingly intended to anchor it firmly against floods and violent currents. We saw in the woods the gum-copal tree and many kinds of palms, with slender graceful trunks and

crowns of feathery leaves. The parasitical creeping-plants were very numerous, forming ropes of various thicknesses crossing and binding the trees together in all directions. Great masses of hartstongue fern (*scolopendra*) occurred on the trunks of the trees, as well as the orchids (*angræca*); wherever a trunk crossed our path in a sloping direction it was covered with them. At every fork where a little moisture and soil could lodge were the broad leaves of the ferns or the waxy flowers of the orchids.

I was much interested on my homeward journey in recognising amongst the trees on the coast the celebrated tangèna (*Tanghinia venenéflua*), from which is obtained the poison used in Madagascar from a remote period as an ordeal. The tangèna is about the size of a large apple-tree, and could it be naturalised in England would make a beautiful addition to our ornamental plantations. The leaves are peculiarly grouped together in clusters, and are somewhat like the separate parts of the leaf of the horse-chestnut. The poison is procured from the nut, and was, until a very recent period, used with fatal effect for the trial of accused persons, and caused the death of many thousands of innocent people during the reign of Queen Rànavàlona.

We arrived at Andrànokòditra, a village of not more than a dozen houses, early in the day. From our house there was a lovely view of the broad lake with its woods and islands, while the sea was only two or three hundred yards in the rear. It was difficult to realise that it was Sunday —for it was quite impossible to discontinue our journey before reaching this place. I therefore endeavoured to keep the day in remembrance as much as possible by reading the Lessons and Psalms for the day, and, as the hours passed away, communing in spirit with those at home

engaged in Sabbath duties and enjoyments. We spent the evening on the shores of the lake. Wild ducks and many kinds of game were here very plentiful, but a canoe is necessary to reach the islands where they chiefly make their retreats. After our evening meal, Mr. Plant slung his hammock, while I again made a bed upon my drawing-cases. I was somewhat disturbed, however, by the cockroaches, which persisted in dropping down from the roof upon and around me. There was no remedy but to care nothing about it, and to forget the annoyance in sleep.

Monday, October 5.—We were up soon after four o'clock, and started before five, while it was still twilight. After going a short distance through the woods we came again to the seashore, and proceeded for some miles close to the water's edge. For a considerable distance there was only a low bank of sand between the salt-water of the ocean and the fresh-water of the lake. In many places the opposite shore showed good sections of the strata, apparently a red sandstone, with a good deal of quartz rock. We left the sea again and went on through the woods, a sharp shower coming on as we entered them. The rain soon ceased, and at nine we got to Vavòny and breakfasted. Here the chief man of the village brought us some eggs as a token of his goodwill towards the foreigners. I may remark that we seldom stopped, either at midday or in the evening, at any village without receiving a visit from the chief of the place and his family, who always carried some present. Fowls, rice, potatoes, eggs, and honey were constantly brought to us, preceded by a speech, which, of course, was unintelligible to me, but which, I was informed, was a recital of the names and honours of the queen, and of their pleasure at seeing the *vazaha* (foreigner) in their village. The Malagasy are a most hospitable people, always courteous and

polite, and remarkable for the good faith they have always kept in agreements and treaties with Europeans. This is the universal testimony of travellers from the earliest time the island was visited. The jealous feeling which has grown up in more modern times is only the natural result of the deception and oppression which many Europeans, and especially the French, have practised upon them.

Leaving Vavòny between eleven and twelve o'clock, we went on again through the woods along the shores of the lake, which here spreads out into broad sheets of water two or three miles wide. The scenery was delightful, both shores being covered with trees; reminding me in many places of the Wye, in others of the lake at Longleat, and, in narrow parts, of Studley Park. Our road for miles much resembled a footpath through a nobleman's park in England; clumps of trees, shrubberies, and short smooth turf, all united to complete the resemblance. In some parts, where the more striking tropical vegetation—the agaves, cacti, and palms—were not seen, the illusion was complete. Clumps of *filaos*, a lofty larch-like tree (*Casuarina laterifolia*), gave a very English appearance to much of the scenery. In other places we saw many specimens of the sago palm, a tree much less in height than the majority of the palms, not exceeding twelve or fourteen feet, but with the same long feathery leaves so characteristic of the order of *Palmaceæ*.

There were also great numbers of a tree bearing a fruit about the size of an orange, but inclosed in a hard shell, perfectly globular, and requiring a smart blow to break. It contains a greyish pulp, and a number of large black seeds; and although by no means equal to an orange in taste, its acid flavour was refreshing enough when thirsty, and fatigued with the heat of travelling at midday. A

great deal of indiarubber is obtained on this coast, as well as gum-copal. These and other vegetable products will probably at some future time become an important part of the exports of the island.

Notwithstanding the beauty of this part of the country, it is extremely unhealthy for foreigners. The rivers on this coast all communicate with the lakes, and during the rainy season great quantities of decaying vegetable matter are brought down from the forests in the interior. The large extent of lake and marsh on these plains bordering the sea gives rise to a malaria which induces the dreaded Malagasy fever. This disease is not so rapidly fatal as the yellow-fever of the West Indies, and differs from it in several other respects. Cold fits of shivering alternate with profuse perspiration. Europeans and Malagasy from other parts of the country are equally liable to it, while the natives constantly residing on the coast seem free from its attacks. Quinine is found to be the most effectual remedy, taken after anodyne and purgative medicines. The Malagasy use vapour-baths and fomentations with various herbs to produce perspiration, and their treatment is frequently very successful. When once the fever has obtained a thorough hold upon the system, it seems almost impossible to eradicate it; and those who may be living far away from the coast, and even in other countries, have been subject to slight attacks in rainy and hot weather for many years after leaving Madagascar.

The earlier accounts of the French and Portuguese settlements on the coast of Madagascar represent the fever as a frightful scourge, sweeping off a large proportion of the soldiers and others who were stationed at their forts. From this, the Isle St. Marie was called the "Grave of the French," and "the Churchyard" and "Dead Island"

by the Dutch and other settlers. There can be no doubt, however, that the fever was often aggravated by the intemperate and dissolute habits of the earlier European visitors, and by want of ordinary precaution and proper medicines.

When Mr. Bevan and Mr. Jones, the first agents of the London Missionary Society, landed on the coast with their families in 1819, very little was known of the climate, or the proper season to travel; and it so happened that they arrived at Tamatave in March, before the rainy season was over, and when there was yet much risk of fever. This first mission-party was soon attacked by the disease: one after another was struck down by it, until, out of six persons, one only (Mr. Jones) remained alive; and he, prostrated by the weakness following the attacks, was obliged to return to Mauritius and recover strength before returning to the work in the following year. So soon was the earliest missionary effort to evangelise Madagascar met by severe trial and discouragement; yet it was only the prelude to many years of great success, and abundant tokens of the Divine approval.

The adventurous traveller, Madame Ida Pfeiffer, found the fever equally although not so immediately fatal. She visited Madagascar in 1857, and her voyage home proved to be the last of her travels. She was at the capital at the time when an attempt was made by certain French residents to dethrone the late Queen Rànavàlona in favour of her son Rakòto. The plot was discovered, and Madame Pfeiffer, through her innocent knowledge of the scheme, was visited with the queen's anger and resentment equally with the active agents in its attempted accomplishment. The Europeans were all sent down to the coast, but they were obliged to travel so slowly as to make it highly pro-

bable that the queen intended that they should die on the road—not daring to execute them, but hoping they would fall victims to the fever. Nearly a month was spent on the way, and although Madame Pfeiffer lived to reach Europe, she died shortly after her return home, owing to the hardships and privations of that terrible journey.

The greater portion of the high land in the interior of Madagascar is free from the ravages of the fever, but not entirely so. There are certain districts where it is equally prevalent, and even more fatal in its character. At about two days' journey to the north-east of Antanànarìvo there is a tract of country to which criminals are sometimes banished. It is said that they seldom live long in this pestilential air, but are struck down by the fever within a few months after arriving at the fatal spot. These localities might with great plausibility have been assigned as the habitat of the fabled upas-tree, whose poisonous influence was, within a comparatively recent period, believed to have made the place where it grew a veritable Valley of the Shadow of Death.

The most healthy time of the year for foreigners to arrive on the coast and travel into the interior is during the months of June, July, August, and September. I came later than this, and did not experience any ill-effects, although several of the mission-party, who preceded me by a week, had slight attacks of the fever after their arrival at the capital.

But to return to our journey. About two o'clock we had to cross the lake, but as there was only one small canoe, it took more than two hours to get all our baggage and men over. We therefore strolled into the woods, finding plenty to interest us in examining the orchids, ferns, and other plants, most of them new to me. We captured an immense

and very splendid spider, new to my companion, who had made entomology his special study. We were amused by the little land-crabs, with their curious stalked eyes, folding down into a case, and with the beautifully-marked lizards and other living objects abounding in tropical forests. The ferry is close to a village rejoicing in the name of Andàvaka Mènaràna, that is, "the hole of serpents." Notwithstanding this ominous appellation, we were not frightened from our path by even a solitary reptile, although a cave not far distant is said to be a lurking-place for great numbers of these creatures. On the other side, after more of the same kind of scenery, we came out upon an extensive grassy plain, from which we could see the purple ranges of forest-covered mountains in the interior.

A little before dusk we arrived at Andèvorànto, a large village situated at the mouth of the river Iharòka, and formerly the capital of the Bétsimisàraka tribes, before they were reduced to subjection by the Hovas. This place would be the natural port of the capital, but for the bar of sand at the entrance of the river. Were it not for this obstruction, ships and steamers could come up into the interior for many miles. Like most of the African rivers, many of the streams on this coast have a sandy bar at their junction with the sea, preventing them from being of much service as harbours for any but small vessels. In the hands of Europeans, Andèvorànto would become an important seaport, giving access to a great extent of country.

The house at which we stayed here was quite a large one, divided into three rooms—the walls covered with ròfia matting, and actually possessing *windows* (but, of course, without glass) and doors. All the houses where we had stayed previously had no windows, and a mat hung over the entrance supplied the place of a door.

While our dinner was being prepared, we walked down to the sea and along the river-banks, hoping to find some natural history specimens peculiar to the locality. During our walk Mr. Plant related to me his success in obtaining a specimen of that remarkable creature, the Aye-Aye,* an animal peculiar to Madagascar, and of which only one or two specimens have as yet reached Europe. The Aye-Aye he procured was sent home to England in spirits, and from it, I believe, Professor Owen prepared his monograph, giving full details of its remarkable structure. The animal is somewhat difficult to be obtained, as it comes out from its retreat chiefly at night, and the people have some superstitious feeling regarding it, so that even a large reward is insufficient to induce them to attempt its capture.

The Aye-Aye is included among the four-handed animals; but it is very unlike the monkeys, and appears to be a link of connection between them and the Rodentia, or gnawing animals. Its structure presents some of the most interesting examples of typical forms being modified to serve special ends, that any animal organisation can exemplify. The food of the Aye-Aye consists of a wood-boring larva, which tunnels beneath the bark of certain trees. To obtain these, the animal is provided with most powerful chisel-shaped teeth, with which it cuts away the outer bark. As, however, the grub retreats to the end of its hole, one of the fingers of the Aye-Aye's hands is slightly lengthened, but considerably diminished in thickness, and furnished with a hooklike claw. Thus provided, the finger is used as a probe, inserted in the tunnel, and the dainty morsel drawn forth from its hiding-place. There are also other modifications, all tending to the more perfect accomplishment of the purposes of its creation; the eyes being very large to see

* *Cheiromys Madagascariensis.*

by night, the ears expanded to catch the faint sound of the grub at work, and the thumbs of the feet largely developed, so as to enable the animal to take a firm hold of the tree while using its teeth.

We were not fortunate enough to find in our rambles one of those enormous eggs, a few of which have been discovered on this coast. Two or three only have been brought to Europe, together with some gigantic bones. They were found at Mànanzàry, a place about 200 miles south; and if the full-grown bird (*Æpyornis*) exceeded other birds in size as much as its egg exceeded other eggs, it must have been the largest bird ever created. The egg is above twelve inches long, and its capacity exceeds that of six or seven ostrich-eggs, holding from ten to eleven quarts. Professor Owen has, however, pointed out that a large egg does not necessarily imply a gigantic bird, since the little kiwi, or apteryx, of New Zealand produces an egg weighing a fourth of its own weight when full-grown.*

At the house where we were quartered, we found, in addition to the luxuries of doors and windows, a bedstead. I took possession of this, hoping to have some immunity from the attacks of the fleas; but they managed to scale the citadel in which I fancied myself secure.

* See Appendix A.: "The Rukh of Madagascar" (*Æpyornis Maximus*).

CHAPTER IV.

JOURNEY TO THE CAPITAL—FROM THE COAST TO THE INTERIOR.

Canoe voyage on river Iharòka—Crocodiles—Superstitious dread of them by natives—Fables and legends—River scenery and vegetation—Traveller's tree—Maròmby—Coffee plantation and orange grove—Difficulties of road—Character of scenery—Climate—Rànomafàna and its hot springs—Lace-leaf plant—Native granaries—Endurance of bearers—Appearance of the people—Native music—Capabilities of country—Ampàsimbè—Cloth-weaving—Ròfia palm—Discomforts at night—Béfòrona—Height of mountains and interior of plateaux—Houses on route—Forest of Alamazàotrà—Difficulties of travelling—Luxuriant vegetation—Orchids, bamboos, and climbing-plants—Small amount of animal life—Remarkable fauna of Madagascar—Geological theories thereon—Interior of island still unexplored—River Mangòro—Incident during persecution—Grand prospect from Ifòdy—Hova houses—Insect life—Angàvo—Treeless character of Imérina—Number of villages—Ambàtomànga—Primitive toilette—First view of capital—Its size and extent—Flight of locusts—Entrance into Antanànarivo.

TUESDAY, *October* 6.—It rained heavily during the night and nearly until daybreak, so it was half-past six o'clock before we were able to leave Andèvorànto. Hitherto we had followed the seashore southwards; now we were to start westwards into the interior. After an immense deal of shouting and some quarrelling on the part of our bearers, who seemed to think it necessary for everyone to give his opinion at the same moment, we pushed off in six large canoes, and paddled away up the river Iharòka. For several miles the stream is upwards of a mile in width. It was a fine calm morning after a stormy night, and as we glided rapidly over the broad smooth expanse of water, and turned our canoe's prow towards the interior mountains, I began really to feel that I was on my way to the capital.

SECTION OF ROUTE FROM COAST TO INTERIOR.

Our last two or three days' travelling, although very pleasant, had seemed only remotely connected with the journey to Antanànarìvo, but now there was no doubt that we were moving directly for the capital of the country.

After half-an-hour's sail, we came to a point where the river branches into three streams, the one we took being about half the width of the main current. We passed many canoes and overtook others; some of these were filled with rice and other produce, and had but a single rower; he sat generally at the stern, and gave a few strokes with the paddle on each side of the canoe alternately, so as to keep the craft in a straight course through the water. Other canoes were filled with what was evidently a family party, going together to some of the markets held in one of the neighbouring villages. Our men seemed to enjoy the exercise of paddling, which was a change from bearing our palanquins and baggage on their shoulders, and they took us up the stream at a great speed. More than once, indeed, I wished they had been less enthusiastic, for they commenced racing with one another, making me not a little apprehensive of being upset. It would not have mattered much to them, as they swim fearlessly, and had nothing to lose; but it would have been unpleasant for us, even apart from the

possibility of crocodiles, which abound in most of the rivers of Madagascar.

These reptiles are so numerous in many parts as to be a great pest, and they destroy great numbers of sheep and cattle, and not unfrequently women and children, who incautiously go into or even near the water. The Malagasy, however, have a superstitious dread of these monsters, which prevents them from attempting to kill them. They rather try to propitiate the creature by prayers, and offerings thrown into the water, and by acknowledging its supremacy in its own element. At Itàsy, a fine lake about sixty miles to the west of the capital, the people in the surrounding villages believe that if a crocodile be killed, a human life will, within a very short time, be exacted by the monster's brother reptiles, as an atonement for his death. Some years ago two or three French travellers shot a crocodile in this lake, and such was the people's consternation and dread of the consequences, that their visitors found it expedient to quit the neighbourhood as quickly as possible. When bringing cattle down to the coast, many are often seized in fording the rivers. The *mpànao-òdy*, or charm-makers, supply *odys*, or charms, to be thrown into the water, as a protection from the crocodiles, and these are said to be very effective; but their virtue is of course due to the noise and shouting and beating the water with which the offering of the ody is always accompanied.

There are a great many native fables and legends about the crocodile, mostly tending to show its strength and cunning. It is said, and I see no reason to doubt the fact, that dogs have a sagacious way of deceiving these reptiles when wishing to cross a stream. The people say that a dog will, on coming to the riverside, stand for

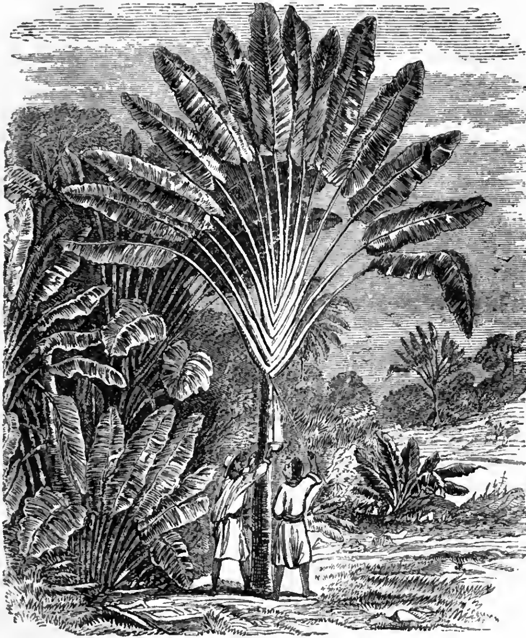
some minutes barking furiously, knowing that the brutes will be attracted by the noise; presently he runs off as fast as his legs will carry him, and swims across at some distance higher up the stream, before his enemies have time to ascend against the current. The eggs of the crocodile are collected and sold for food in the markets, but I never brought myself to test the merits of these delicacies.

We kept near the banks of the river, and so were able to examine the luxuriant rank vegetation with which they were covered. In many places we saw the bamboo, with its long-jointed tapering stem, but small here compared with what we afterwards saw in the forest. Plantations of rice and sugarcane mingled with plantains and palms and other trees more English-like in appearance. Numbers of great waterlilies, with leaves standing erect in the stream, convolvuli, and numerous flowers of new forms, everywhere met the eye. The shores were flat at first, but became more hilly, and the scenery more varied, as we proceeded.

As we sailed up the river the "traveller's tree"* became very plentiful, and soon gave quite a peculiar character to the landscape. This remarkable and beautiful tree belongs to the order *Musaceæ*, although in some points its structure resembles the palms rather than the plantains. It is immediately recognised by its graceful crown of broad green leaves, arranged at the top of its trunk in the shape of a fan. The leaves are from twenty to thirty in number, and from eight to ten feet long by a foot and a half broad. They very closely resemble those of the banana, and when unbroken by the wind have a very striking and beautiful appearance. The name of "traveller's tree' is given on account of its affording at all times a supply of cool pure

* *Urania speciosa*, or *Ravinala Madagascariensis.*

water, upon piercing the base of the leafstalk with a spear or other pointed instrument. This supply is owing to the large broad surface of the leaf, which condenses the moisture of the atmosphere, and from which the water trickles



THE "TRAVELLER'S TREE."

down into the hollow where the leafstalk joins the stem. Each of these forms a little reservoir, in which water may always be found. This property of absorbing moisture is possessed almost to as great a degree by the banana. The

leaves are used to beat the roofs in case of fire, on account of the amount of water they contain; and the main stem is full of small chambers filled with water, which has been distilled by the smooth cool leaves of the tree.

The name of "builder's tree" might be given with equal or greater propriety, for it is as useful to the inhabitants of the coast as is the cocoanut palm to the South Sea Islanders. The leaves are used for thatching and for the lining of houses; the bark is beaten out flat, and forms the flooring, while the trunk supplies timber for the framing and planking. Quantities of the fresh leaves are sold every morning in the markets, and take the place of plates and dishes. At the new year's festival, and upon some other occasions, the jaka, or meat, killed at these times is always served up, together with rice, upon pieces of the leaves of the traveller's tree or the banana; and a kind of spoon or ladle is also formed, made by twisting up part of a leaf, and tying it with the tendrils of some climbing plant.

Our canoe voyage was nearly twenty miles in length, the last two or three up a narrow creek, not above twenty or thirty feet in width. In one of the narrowest parts of the stream we were stopped by a tree, which had fallen across the creek, just above the surface of the water. With some trouble and difficulty the canoes were each hoisted over the obstruction, the luggage being shifted from one to another. Some friends who came up about nine months afterwards, told me that the tree was still there. Probably it had caused a stoppage hundreds of times, yet no one dreamed of taking the little extra trouble necessary to remove it altogether from the passage. It was just the same in the forest; when a tree fell across the road there it lay for months, until it rotted away. Palanquins had to be hoisted over it, or with difficulty pushed beneath it,

but it was never removed until nature helped in the work. It seemed to be no one's duty to cut it up or take it out of the way; there are no "turnpike trusts," and the government never give themselves any concern about the matter.

We were glad to land at Maròmby at ten o'clock, for rain came on, and before we were well housed it poured down for some time in torrents. Here we got as dessert, after breakfast, a quantity of wild raspberries, which are larger than the English kind, but with smaller seeds. Close to the house where we stayed to breakfast was a coffee plantation. The trees grow to the height of seven or eight feet, with dark glossy leaves. What we term the berry is really the seed, two being enclosed in a small scarlet fruit about the size of a gooseberry, which is filled before the seed is ripe with a sweetish juice. The coffee-plant thrives in all parts of the island, and might be made a very important addition to the exports of Madagascar.

Near the house were also a number of orange-trees. There was no fruit ripe at this time, but on my homeward journey I had the gratification of seeing here an orange-grove with the trees laden with thousands of the golden fruit. We were allowed to take as many as we pleased, and, as the day was hot and sultry, were not slow to avail ourselves of the permission. Perhaps there are few more beautiful sights than an orange-grove when the fruit is ripe upon the trees. The golden apples of the Hesperides must surely have been the produce of an orange plantation.

The rain ceased after some time, but we did not get off until past two o'clock, for our men became rather obstinate, and evidently wanted to stay at Maròmby for the rest of the day. This we were not at all disposed to allow. At last we started, and in a few minutes had a specimen of the adventures that were in store for us in passing through

the forest. In attempting to ford a stream, one of my men suddenly sank nearly to his waist in a thick yellow mud. It was by the barest chance that I was not turned over into the water; however, after some scrambling from one man's shoulders to another, I managed to get out and reach dry land. There was a shaky ricketty bridge a little higher up the stream, and by this I contrived to get across.

We now struck right into the hills, up and down, down and up, for nearly four hours. The road was a mere footpath, and sometimes not even that, but merely the bed of a torrent made by the heavy rains. It wound sometimes round the hills, and sometimes straight up them, and then down into the valleys, at inclinations difficult enough to get along without anything to carry but oneself; with heavy loads requiring immense exertion. My palanquin described all kinds of angles; sometimes I was resting nearly on my head, and presently almost on my feet. When winding round the hills we were continually in places where a false step of my bearers might have sent us tumbling down sixty or seventy, and sometimes a hundred feet into the valley below. A dozen times or so we had to cross streams foaming over rocks and stones, to scramble down to which, and out again, were feats requiring no ordinary dexterity. I often expected to be tumbled over into the water or down the rocks, the path being often steeper than the roof of a house. Several times I got out and walked up and down the hills in order to relieve the men; but I afterwards found that they carried me without fatigue up much steeper ascents. Some of these scenes were exceedingly beautiful; and, with the rushing foaming waters, overhung with palms, ferns, plantains, and bamboos, made scores of scenes in which a painter would have delighted.

In passing along I was struck with the peculiar outline of the hills; they are mostly rounded cones, called by the French *mamelle*-shaped, and not connected together in chains, but detached, with deep valleys between; so that it would be impossible without a great number of bridges or embankments to make a road with practicable gradients for vehicles. In almost every sheltered hollow were clumps of the traveller's tree, together with palms and bamboos. The hills appeared to increase in height as we advanced, while beyond them all in the far distance we could see the line of the central chain of mountains covered with dense forests in every part. The scene, but for the tropical trees, resembled the Lancashire and West Riding scenery, near the Todmorden Valley and Blackstone Edge. As far as I could make out, the hills appeared mostly of bright red sandstone or clay, interspersed with quartz. Great black masses of rock crop out on the sides of many of them in most curious fantastic shapes.

Mr. Plant told me that it was a mistake to suppose that there was any dry season here, as it rains, more or less, at all times amongst these hills. He also thought the unhealthiness of the climate was greatly exaggerated, as he had been up the country in December, in May, and in October, and had found very little difference, except that it was hotter in December than at other times. The temperature, so far, did not exceed that of warm summer days in England, with cool mornings and evenings.

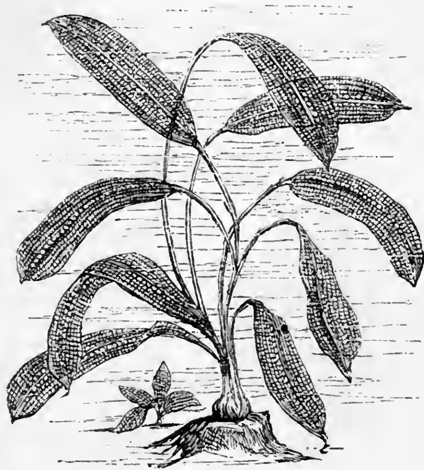
Some time before we arrived at our halting-place, a heavy rain came on, adding much to the exertion and not a little to the discomfort of travelling. Still, through it we went, and reached Ràno-mafàna as it was getting dusk; my lads bringing me in as usual at a full trot, after doing seventeen or eighteen miles in less than four hours.

The name of this place means "hot waters," and is derived from some hot springs which are found within a short distance from the village. The water is medicinal in character, and is said by the people to be of some benefit in certain complaints. The ground near the spring is quite warm to the touch, the water itself being too hot to allow one's hand to be plunged into it. During the autumn of the year 1867 the Queen of Madagascar, attended by many thousands of her subjects, made a royal progress to the east coast to see this part of her dominions. One of the objects of her journey was also reported to be to bathe in these medicinal springs at Ràno-mafàna.

At this place I procured some specimens of that remarkable vegetable production, the Lace-leaf plant, or water yam (*Ouvirandra fenestralis*). The existence of this beautiful plant has been long known to botanists, but it was introduced into Europe by the Rev. W. Ellis after his visit to Madagascar (1853–54); and from plants brought by him to England it has been propagated, and specimens sent to many of the chief botanical collections, as well as to Kew, Chiswick, and the Crystal Palace. I knew of the plant being abundant in some of the streams on this coast, and therefore described it as well as I could to one of my bearers. A little time after our arrival at the village, he brought me three or four plants, together with the roots, and in one case with the flower also attached. The leaves were from six to eight inches long and an inch and a half wide; but I afterwards found at Mauritius that they grew to more than double this size in the Royal Gardens at Pamplemouses.

As the name implies, the leaf is like a piece of lace-work, or, more strictly speaking, like a skeleton leaf, the spaces between the veining being open. The veining is

something like that of a lily-leaf, the longitudinal fibres running through the whole length, and crossed at very regular intervals by the transverse ribs, which are of threadlike fineness. The scientific name, *fenestralis* ("windowed"), conveys this idea of a regular arrangement of structure. The leafstalk varies in length with the depth of the water, always keeping a little below the surface.

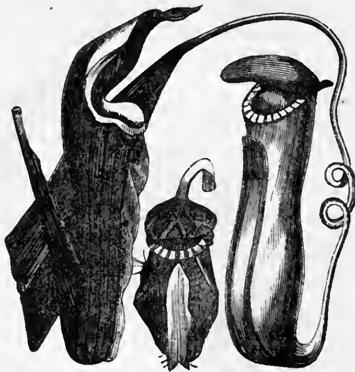


THE LACE-LEAF PLANT.

Each plant has ten or a dozen leaves branching from the root, which in the specimens brought to me resembled a small potato. It is used for food by the Malagasy, and in taste is like the farinaceous yam, common to most tropical countries. From this likeness the generic name *Ouvirandra* is derived—*ouvy*, or *ovy*, being the native word for yam. The plant grows in running water, and thrives

best in a warm situation where the water is tepid. The flower grows on a long stalk, and rises above the surface of the water. It is of a pinkish colour, dividing into two curiously-curved hairy tufts. Few objects can be imagined more beautiful or interesting for cultivating in an aquarium than the lace-leaf plant, which Sir W. J. Hooker terms "one of the most curious of nature's vegetable productions."

The ouvirandra is an endogenous plant, included in the order *Juncaginaceæ*, to which the arrow-grasses and rushes belong.



THE PITCHER-PLANT.

The woods on the coast of Madagascar, where good water is very scarce, furnish several species of those curious and beautiful vegetable productions, the Pitcher-plants (*Nepenthes*).

Taking a walk round the village before it was dark, I noticed several houses raised upon posts five or six feet above the ground. At the top of each support, just under

the floor, was a projecting circle of wood, polished very smooth. I found on inquiry that these buildings were granaries, and were raised in this way to protect the rice from rats, which are a great annoyance in most parts of the country. The smooth ring of wood effectually prevented them from getting any farther than the top of the upright posts. The ladder for getting up to these granaries is a very primitive contrivance; it consists merely of a round pole with notches cut in the upper part to keep the foot from slipping.

Wednesday, October 7.—We were astir early, and left our quarters at six o'clock. It was a beautiful morning as we recommenced our journey, and began to mount hills and descend valleys and cross streams as before—with this difference, that the hills became higher and steeper, and the road more difficult. How our men managed to carry themselves up and down, to say nothing of the heavy loads on their shoulders, puzzled me, but they did their work apparently without much fatigue. My set of eight bearers were especially good fellows, merry and cheerful, always taking the lead, and generally bringing me in a quarter of an hour before my companions, and a considerable time before the luggage came up.

When carrying, they wear but little clothing—merely the *salàka*, or cloth, round the loins, and sometimes a jacket made of some coarse material. In the cool mornings they generally wore over the shoulders the *lamba*,* of ròfia, or hempen cloth; but during the rest of the day this was bound tightly round the waist, or thrown upon the palanquin. The two sets of four men used to take the work in "spells" of a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes at a

* *Lamba* is the Malagasy word for cloth generally, but it has also a specific use as applied to the chief article of native dress.

time; when the others relieved them they did not stop, but those taking the poles of the palanquin would stoop under and take it on their shoulders with hardly any jerk, even when running at a good speed. Occasionally one set would take the duty for a couple of hours, while, if going fast or on difficult ground, they relieved each other very frequently. Every three or four minutes they changed the load from one shoulder to another, the leaders lifting the pole over their heads.

In proceeding on our journey we met great numbers of màromìta bringing poultry, manioc, potatoes, rice, and other produce from the interior to the coast. These articles are mostly brought to Tamatave and other ports, so that the ships trading to these places are supplied with abundance of provisions at a very moderate rate. The poultry were enclosed in large open panniers, or baskets made of strips of bamboo woven together, and slung at each end of a pole of bamboo or light wood. We also overtook many men taking European goods up to the capital—quantities of cheap crockery, iron pots for cooking, and a great variety of other articles. Many also carried salt, and others the same open wicker-baskets in which fowls are brought down, but now containing quantities of the raw fibre of the ròfia palm, which grows very abundantly on the coast. This is taken up to Antanànarìvo and other parts of the interior to be manufactured into cloth. Sometimes we met them singly, or two and three together, but more often they travelled in companies of ten, twenty, or thirty. Occasionally we passed a Hova officer in a palanquin borne by his slaves, and often with his wife and other members of his family at a little distance in the rear, also in palanquins, with female slaves attending them, and running at a good pace to keep up with the men.

In one day we often saw a great variety of face and colour, and representatives of several of the different tribes which people the island. The Malagasy are now, to all intents and purposes, one nation, but they are made up of several tribes which differ considerably in colour and feature.

In the faces we saw every day, although there were few that would be called handsome, judging by a European standard, yet there was a large proportion of good heads, with high well-formed foreheads, and a general look of quickness and intelligence. The impression given was certainly not that of a race low in mental organisation or capabilities, and subsequent experience fully confirmed this opinion.

At Ambàtoharàna, where we breakfasted, we were favoured with a little native music while our meal was being prepared. The instrument consisted of a piece of bamboo about four feet long, with parts of the strong outer fibre detached, and strained over small pieces of wood resembling the bow of a violin. With this simple contrivance the performer managed to produce something of a tune, in a soft plaintive kind of measure, not unlike the tones of a guitar. This instrument is called the *valìha*.

Our midday journey this day was a continual ascent, until we were evidently at a considerable elevation above the sea. From one ridge we had a most extensive prospect, and could see the Indian Ocean fifty or sixty miles behind us, while before us was a yet higher chain of hills, dark with the dense forests of Alamazaòtra. As we rode along I could not but observe the capabilities of the country, and its vast powers of production, were it brought under cultivation. The hills would supply pasture for millions of sheep; in the valleys, sugar, rice, and coffee

might be grown sufficient for the consumption of the British Empire; while the coast is admirably suited for the cultivation of cotton. The country is rich also in

TREE-FERN.

mineral ores—in copper and iron, and probably also in coal, in the northern parts. Every element of wealth is

present, only wanting a larger population, and more knowledge to develope the resources of the island.

We came this day into a belt of tree-ferns, some of large size, with their great fronds arranged horizontally in a circle round the top of the trunk. There were also great numbers of pineapples growing wild, with the magnificent scarlet flowers just developing into fruit.

We descended to, crossed, and went for some time along a beautiful river, resembling in many parts the Dove at Dovedale, and in others the Wharfe at Bolton. The view from the top of an immense hill, of the beautiful river winding far below, was most charming. The paths by which we ascended and descended would have astonished us in England, but by this time a moderately smooth path had become an object of surprise. In some places there was only a narrow passage between rocks overhung with palm and plantain leaves—most picturesque, but most difficult to travel by.

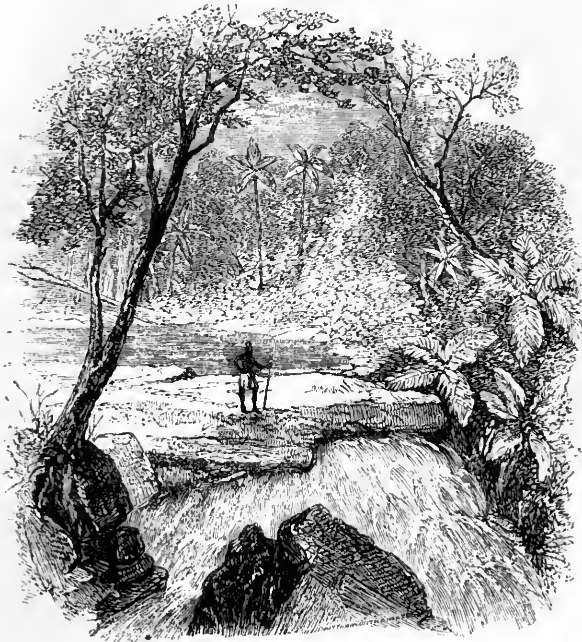
We got in early in the afternoon to Ampàsimbé, a rather large village. While waiting for dinner we watched the women at the opposite house preparing the material from which they make the ròfia cloth. It is the inner fibre of the long grasslike leaves of the ròfia palm (*Sagus ruffia*). The cuticle on each side is peeled off, leaving a thin white fibrous substance, which is divided by a sort of comb into different widths, according to the kind of material to be made. In other villages we saw the women weaving the cloth with most rude and primitive looms, consisting merely of pieces of wood stuck in the mud floor of the house, and a framework of three or four pieces of bamboo. The material they make, however, is a good strong-looking article, with stripes of various colours and patterns woven into the stuff, and is extensively used by the poorer classes.

The ròfia palm grows very abundantly on the coast, as well as all over the island. It is, I believe, peculiar to Madagascar, and can easily be distinguished from other trees of its class. The trunk resembles that of many palms in having a rugged and rough surface, but the leaves are its most striking feature. They branch off from the main stem rather low down, and are of enormous length, as much as from twenty to thirty feet. Few trees are seen perfect, as the midrib has a very strong but light structure, and on this account is largely used for ladders, for palanquin poles, and for anything requiring lightness as well as strength. The leaf really consists of a great number of long grasslike pinnate fronds set at right angles to the main rib. In sheltered situations, the tree is found as high as 4000 feet above the sea-level.

If we had been disposed to copy the titles of some popular evening entertainments, the nights preceding this might have been termed "A Night with the Fleas," and "A Night with the Mosquitoes," but this was emphatically "A Night with the Rats." We saw and heard them racing round the eaves of the house before we lay down, but as soon as the light was put out they descended, and began to rattle about our pots and pans in search of food. We got up and fired a pistol among them, and this appeared for a time to scare them away; but in the early morning their attentions became so personal that we were obliged to light a candle, and keep it burning on the floor all night. After this we had comparative quiet, but before lighting the candle they had been scampering over my companion in his hammock, and over myself as I lay on the floor.

Thursday's journey, although shorter than that of most days, was one of the most difficult of all, especially the

morning division of it—hills steeper than ever, and (if possible) rougher footpaths, so that we were often obliged to get out and walk, making the journey very fatiguing. For nearly three hours we were passing through a dense



FALLS AT ANÈVOKA IN THE FOREST.

wood; in some places the path was really frightful. I found along the roadside several varieties of those beautiful leaved plants, veined with scarlet and buff, which were so much cultivated in England about that time. Ferns of all

kinds were very abundant and luxuriant, from the minutest species to the great tree-fern.

One afternoon's journey took us for some distance along a beautiful river, which foamed and roared over the rocks in its course, and which we forded repeatedly. The path was most picturesque, but very fatiguing; in many parts the track could hardly be distinguished at all from the dense rank growth of plants and long grass. We arrived at Béfòrona at one o'clock, and fully intended to have proceeded another stage, as it was so early in the afternoon, but we found our men so exhausted that we were obliged to stay there for the rest of the day.

We were now ascending towards the central plains of the island, which lie at a considerable elevation above the sea-level. To reach this from the east coast we have to cross the great chain of mountains which forms the backbone of Madagascar, and runs nearly throughout its whole length from north to south. This mountain range is considerably to the east of the centre line; but about midway it sends off a branch which makes a vast sweep in a circular direction, enclosing, or nearly so, a comparatively level plateau. This is Ankòva, *i.e.* the country of the Hovas, and of their capital, Antanànarìvo. Although this and the other central plains are a considerable height above the sea, yet the mountains do not rise to great altitudes. The highest points of the range called Ankàratra, which encloses Ankòva to the south and west, do not probably exceed 10,000 feet in height, while Ankòva itself is elevated between 4000 and 5000 feet above the level of the sea. There appears to be rather a general rising of the surface than any great elevation of detached points. On my return to England in 1867, I found how much less difficult was the journey from Antanànarìvo to the coast than that in the opposite

direction, owing of course to our descending instead of ascending. The journey from Alamazaòtra to Rànomafàna, which occupied three days in going to the capital, was easily accomplished in two in the homeward journey.*

Béfòrona is situated in an almost circular valley, with a river running through it and surrounded by hills. It has the reputation of being a very unhealthy place, probably owing to its moist and warm atmosphere, and being so shut in by hills and woods. There was nothing, however, at either of the times when I passed through it, to give an unfavourable impression of the place; on the contrary, I was rather prepossessed in its favour. The village, like most in this part of the country, has the houses arranged in a square. Their floors are generally raised a foot or more above the ground, and are formed of bark, beaten out flat and laid upon bamboos. The framing and roof are made of light poles or split bamboo, filled in with the leaves of the traveller's tree, and thatched with the same material.

* The section of the route from Tamatave to the capital at page 68 has been prepared from the information supplied by Lieutenant Oliver and Commodore Dupré in their books. The heights are supplied from observations taken by aneroid barometer by M. Dupré. The gradual rise from the sea to the great forest will be observed in the section, and then the sudden step upwards to the central plains at the Angàvo mountains, which are, indeed, only mountains on one side, as they form the edge of the great plateau of Ankòva. They rise from 1000 to 1300 feet above the plain of the Mangòro.

The following are the elevations of the chief points in the route:

Béfòrona - - -	1390	feet above sea-level.
Alamazaòtra - -	2308	" " "
Mòramànga - -	2888	" " "
Ifòdy range - -	3677	" " "
Angàvo range (highest point) - - -	4346	" " "
Antanànarìvo (summit)	4320	" " "

In the centre of some of these village squares was a flag-staff, and in others, a pole with the skulls and horns of bullocks fixed to it. These are in some cases memorials of the festivities connected with the circumcision, and in other instances are apparently regarded as *sampys*, or charms, protecting the place and its inhabitants from evil. We were surprised to see three-fourths of the houses unoccupied, many half pulled down, and hardly a man about the place. This was probably owing to the alarm then felt about the French, which had led the native government to largely increase the army, and to call out almost all the effective male population in the central districts. We had a visit from the wife of the chief of the village, who brought us a present of fowls and rice. She and her attendants squatted on the floor round us, where they sat for some time.

After resting awhile, we strolled along one of the streams with our guns, to try and obtain specimens of some of the birds peculiar to the neighbourhood. On our way back we observed some boys using an instrument called *isiriaka*, with which they are able to kill small birds. It consists of a long and fine bamboo with the internal divisions removed. A small arrow, tipped with an iron point, is inserted, and is discharged by blowing at the larger end. About three inches of the end is covered with wool, to fill up the aperture and prevent any "windage." They use this with great precision, and can strike a mark at a considerable distance. A similar weapon is used by the Indians of South America in the countries bordering the Amazon river.

Friday, October 9.—Left Béfòrona soon after five, and for nearly four hours were passing through the forest of Alamazaòtra, over the highest hills and the most difficult paths we

had yet seen. Certainly this day's journey was the most fatiguing of any on the whole route, so that when we reached our halting-place I was thoroughly exhausted, and glad to throw myself down on the mattress on the floor and sleep for an hour or two. At one part of the road there is a long steep slope of clay, known as Fìtomanìan-'omby, or "weeping-place of the bullocks," so called from the labour and difficulty with which the poor animals mount the steep ascent on their road down to the coast. In coming down this and similar places, the utmost care was necessary on the part of the bearers; but they are very surefooted and patient, and take every precaution to carry their burden safely. In ascending we frequently required the help of all eight men to drag the palanquin up to the top. The villages in the heart of these vast woods are few and far between. Our halting-place for breakfast consisted merely of three or four woodcutters' huts in a few square yards of cleared ground.

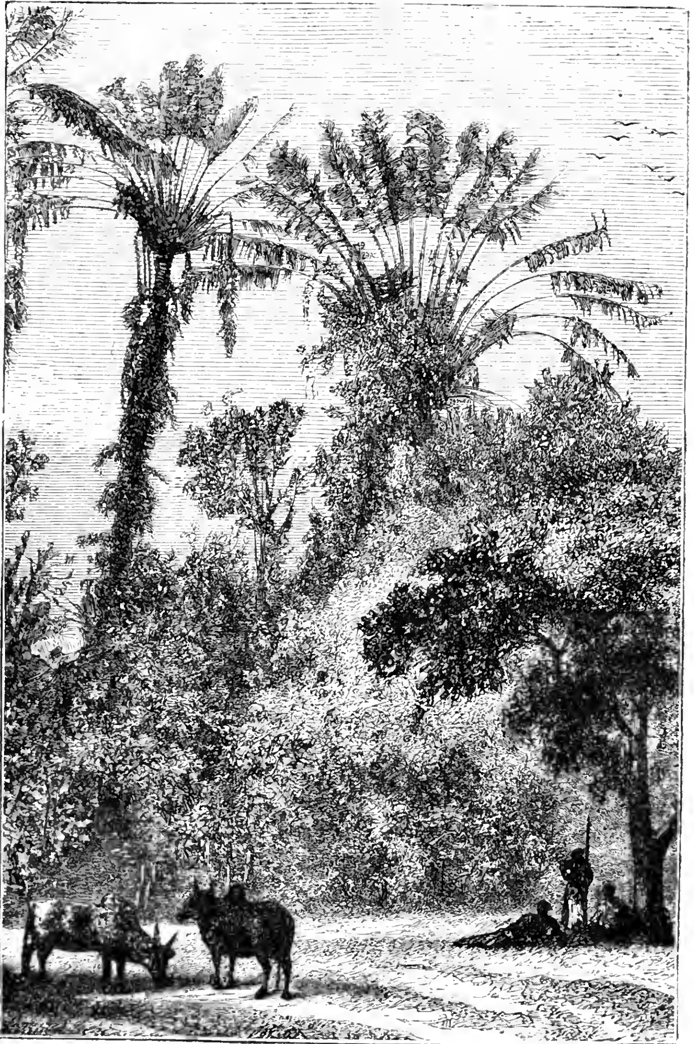
Our afternoon's work was much the same as the morning's. In many places the rain had made a perfect slough of thick mud, and my men had hard work to get through. I could not cease to wonder how my heavy luggage was brought along. For a considerable distance our way lay along a most romantic-looking stream, whose course was broken by great masses and shelves of rock, over which poured beautiful cascades, reminding me of Welsh river scenery. Often in the higher parts of the road, where the rivers down in the gorges were hidden by the dense masses of wood, we could hear the roar of waters in the profound stillness of the forest. At the chief pass in this chain of hills we passed a tremendous cliff of rock, which rises sheer out of the valley to a height of four or five hundred

feet—certainly one of the grandest natural objects I had ever seen.

Notwithstanding the fatigue of the journey, it was impossible not to be struck with admiration and delight at the grandeur of the vegetation. The profusion and luxuriance of vegetable life were very extraordinary. There appeared to be few trees of great girth of trunk, but their height was considerable, especially in the valleys. High over all the other trees shot up the mastlike trunks of many varieties of palms, with their graceful crowns of feathery leaves. A dense undergrowth of shrubs, tree-ferns, and dwarf palms made in many places quite a green twilight; while overhead, the branches were interlaced and bound together by countless creeping-plants, whose rope-like tendrils crossed in all directions, and made a labyrinth which it was hardly possible to pass through. Occasionally we came across large trees in flower, giving a glory of colour seen nowhere but in tropical woods.

The orchids were very abundant. Wherever a fallen tree hung across the path, there they found a lodging-place, and beautified the decaying trunks with their exquisite waxy flowers of pink and white. The variety of wild flowers was very surprising. My bearers soon perceived how interested I was in observing their novel and curious forms, and brought to me all the different varieties they found near the path, so that in the evening my palanquin contained a large collection of specimens of flowers and plants gathered during the day. I managed to dry some few, but the greater part had to be thrown away, as I had no means of preserving them to take up to the capital.

In some parts of the woods the different species of bamboos gave quite a peculiar and distinct character to the vistas. Some of them shoot up in one long slender jointed



FOREST SCENERY.

stem, with fringes of delicate leaves, and hang over the path like enormous whips; while other species clothe the more sturdy trees with a dense mantle of pale-green drapery. In that portion of the forest through which we passed this day, numbers of the trees were ornamented with long pendent masses of feathery grey moss or lichen, giving them a most venerable appearance, and reminding me of the opening lines of Longfellow's "Evangeline:"

> "This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
> Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,
> Stand like Druids of old, with voices sad and prophetic,
> Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms."

Some of the trees we passed were of enormous height; one palm especially we noticed, standing right in our path, with a straight trunk that could not be less than a hundred feet high before the leaves shot out. The Madagascar forests contain a large variety of valuable timber trees, chiefly of the hardwooded species; mahogany of various kinds, teak, camphor-wood, ebony, and rosewood, are all very abundant, and if internal communication should be opened up would form a valuable addition to the exports of the country.

Although the vegetation was most luxuriant, I was surprised by the almost perfect silence of the woods, and the extreme rarity of animal life. Except an occasional note from a bird, and sometimes the wild melancholy cries of the lemurs, there was a deathlike silence, unbroken even by the hum of insects. This was no doubt partly owing to the season and the wet weather, for there is a great variety of insect life in the warmer months. But the chief reason lies in facts of which I was then unaware, and which

perhaps may be appropriately mentioned in this place From the foregoing descriptions of forest scenery it will be seen that the flora of Madagascar presents many new and striking forms of vegetable life; but its fauna is still more extraordinary. The vegetation is interesting and exceptional, but the animal life is still more so, and in the words of Dr. Sclater, secretary to the Zoological Society, "presents one of the best-known and strangest anomalies in geographical distribution."* This zoological peculiarity consists as much, or more, in what is wanting, as in what is present. Separated from Africa by a channel not three hundred miles broad at one point, we should have supposed that Madagascar would partake to a great extent of the same characteristics, as regards animal life, as the neighbouring continent. But it is really remarkably different. There is an extraordinary absence of animal life, especially in the larger species of mammalia; and this remark applies not only to the forests, but to every known part of the island.

First of all, the large carnivora are all wanting; there are no lions, leopards, tigers, panthers, or hyenas—nothing larger than a wild cat and a small species of wolf being known. The large thick-skinned animals, so plentiful in every river and forest in Africa, have no representatives in Madagascar; no elephant browses in the woods, no rhinoceros or hippopotamus lazily gambols in the streams. The numerous species of antelope, gazelle, deer, and giraffe which scour the African plains are entirely absent, and, excepting two varieties of ox, there is no specimen of this useful class of mammals. Even the horse has been introduced from Europe, while its cousins, the zebra and quagga, have no place in the Madagascar fauna. The order of mam-

* See Quarterly Journal of Science, April, 1864: "Mammals of Madagascar," by P. C. Sclater, M.A., PH.D.

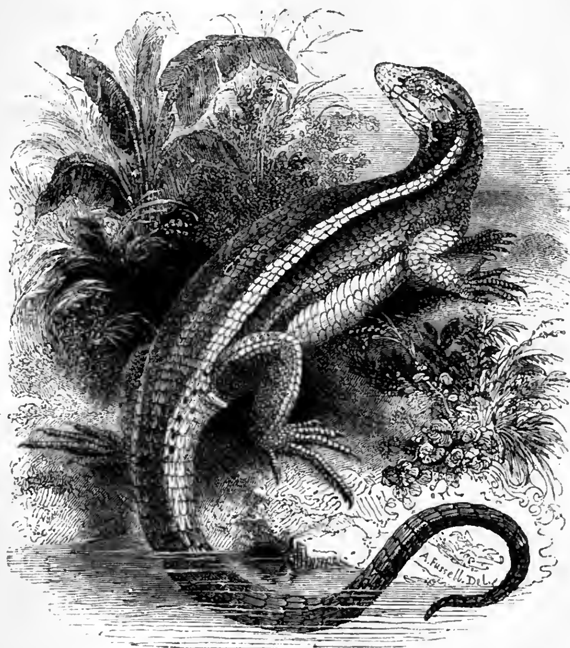
malia most developed is the four-handed, or quadrumana; but this, again, is represented by but a single group, the lemurs, which are the most characteristic animals of the island. There are no true monkeys or apes, nor does the gorilla put in an appearance. The lemurs are very distinct from all these, and are very pretty creatures, bearing but little resemblance to the half-human, grotesque appearance of some of the quadrumanous animals, or to the savage character of the larger apes and baboons. The head with its

THE RUFFED LEMUR.

muzzle is like that of a dog; one species has a large and long bushy tail barred with black and white, which is generally curled round the back and neck when the animal is at rest. Another variety has a curious development of hair on the face, giving it the appearance of possessing a pair of very bushy white whiskers. They are gentle and affectionate in disposition, and being easily tamed are often kept as pets.

As far as is yet known, the mammalia of Madagascar consist of only forty-nine species—an extraordinarily small

number for such a large island; and of these, twenty-eight, or nearly two-thirds, belong to the lemuridæ. Still stranger is the fact, that these animals are allied to Asiatic rather than to African forms. These are certainly most remark-



DOUBLE-BANDED GERRHOSAURUS.

able and anomalous occurrences, and from them and other zoological facts, Dr. Sclater has drawn the following conclusions:—1. That Madagascar has never been connected with Africa as it at present exists; 2. That Madagascar and the Mascarene Islands must have remained for a long

epoch separated from every other part of the globe; and 3. That some land-connection must have existed in former ages between Madagascar and India.

It may be further remarked, that excepting the two varieties of the ox, a species of wild boar, goats and sheep, all animals found in the island are small. Besides the lemurs already mentioned, there are several species of bats, some of the small insectivorous animals, the hedgehog, tenrec, etc., and one or two of the rodentia. The same remark applies also to the birds, excepting the probably extinct æpyornis. There are many varieties of falcon, hawk, owl, parrot, and the smaller birds; but the larger kinds—the eagles, vultures, etc.—seem to be wanting. It must be remembered, however, that Madagascar has been but very imperfectly explored. Many large tracts of the interior have never been visited by Europeans, and a great portion of the island is still an unknown country. A comparison of the few maps which have been prepared of Madagascar will show how imperfect is our knowledge of the interior, and how untrustworthy is the information they supply. There can be little doubt that an exploration of the whole country would add great numbers of new species, both of plants and animals, to those at present known to naturalists.*

On Saturday morning, at seven o'clock, I wished Mr. Plant good-bye, and set off with my men, leaving him at the village, which he intended making his headquarters for two or three weeks, while collecting natural history specimens in the forest. The road was not nearly so difficult as on the past day, so that I had no need to alight from the palanquin all the way to Ampàsimpòtsy, where I

* See Appendix B.: "Notes on the Natural History of the Island."

stayed to breakfast. The hills were much more moderate in height, with a good deal of open clearing, although the forest still continued on either hand, but not in those dense masses of wood through which we had pierced on the preceding day.

Leaving our halting-place at noon, we gradually got clear of the woods, and early in the afternoon ascended a very high hill, from which we could see to a great distance, both westward and eastward. Behind us was the great chain of hills, covered with forest, through which we had passed, while in front stretched a vast undulating plain, bare and almost without a tree. Beyond this was the line of the blue mountains of Ankày, and beyond these again those of Ankòva.

It was dull travelling alone, after the pleasant companionship of a fellow-traveller ; and in making arrangements for meals, etc., I felt how perfectly helpless a man is when he cannot speak so as to be understood. I was a barbarian to my men, and they were barbarians to me ; for my stock of Malagasy words was very limited, and probably almost unintelligible as to pronunciation; so that I was at a complete standstill for nearly everything I wanted to say. We reached Mòramànga, at the commencement of the great plain, soon after three in the afternoon, and there halted for the rest of the day. This village is a military post of the Hova government, and on coming down from the capital, passports are examined by the officer in charge of the detachment stationed here.

Next morning we were stirring early, and left Mòramànga while it was still dusk. There was a thick mist, and my men were shivering with the cold, against which their scanty clothing formed a poor protection. For an hour or two we saw but little except for a few yards around

us; but as the sun rose, the fog rolled up like a vast curtain, revealing the beautiful line of the Ifòdy hills straight before us, some six or eight miles distant. The slopes were partly covered with trees, but a good deal of the surface was brown and bare. The plain, although level compared with the country we had passed through, is full of undulations and deep hollows, which appeared like the beds of streams in the rainy season. In the deepest of the clefts runs a beautiful and rapid river, the Mangòro, about 150 feet wide at the point where we crossed it in canoes. This river falls into the sea at about the centre of the eastern coast, and is of considerable size at its mouth. It would be a valuable means of communicating with the capital, were its course not so much interrupted by rocky rapids at many points.

This ferry at Andàkana (*i.e.*, "at the canoes"), where we crossed the Mangòro, will always have an interest from its connection with an incident during the persecution in the reign of Rànavàlona. When Rafàravàvy and her companions were fleeing from their fierce persecutors at the capital, they were stopped on their way down to the coast by the difficulty of crossing this river. The day and night before they reached the Mangòro were full of peril and fear. They had tracked their course, as well as they could, through the depth of the forest, shunning the beaten path and every house, until it was midnight; then, weary and footsore, they laid themselves down to rest, but the cold and heavy rain drove sleep from their eyes. On proceeding towards the ferry in the morning, they were terrified to find two hundred soldiers there, on their way to Tamatave. They hid themselves until evening, but again came the question, how to get across. The river was wide and deep, and as crocodiles abounded, the risk of attempting to swim

was too great. They therefore came to the conclusion that they could only get over in the ferryman's canoe. So after it was dark they went down again to the river; the canoe had just returned from the opposite bank, to which it had carried a party of soldiers. Putting a bold face upon the matter, and their faces being hidden by the darkness, they asked the man to take them across; and, supposing that they had belonged to the party of soldiers who had just passed, he consented, and thus, in the hands of Providence, became the unconscious instrument of their deliverance.

Soon after crossing the river, we commenced the ascent of Ifòdy, a very steep and difficult path, for an hour or more; but as we mounted higher and higher, a glorious prospect revealed itself. Looking back after we had reached the summit, there was the Mòramànga plain, bounded by the distant forest-clad mountains of Alamazaòtra; and, nearer the base of the hill, the Mangòro could be seen in a wavy blue line, stretching far away to the south, until it was lost in the dim distance. Before us, to the left, was a lovely valley, fertile and green with rice-fields, watered by the Valàla river and shut in by the Angàvo range; while on the right was a confused mass of hills, looking like a mighty sea which had suddenly been hardened and fixed in its tossing. As I went up to the capital this view was striking and impressive; but as the sun was nearly vertical, there was not that variety of light and shade which brings out conformation of surface. But on my return-journey I was fortunate in seeing this prospect soon after sunrise, when the shadows were dark, and the mists were rolling round the heads of the hills; and never did any scene appear so grand and wild to my eye or imagination as was this view from the top of Ifòdy in that early morning.

There was much more evidence of civilisation as we proceeded; many of the valleys being occupied with rice-fields, which were kept covered with water by a system of irrigation. We had now got into the country of the Hovas, and could see an evident difference in the appearance of the inhabitants. They were lighter in colour and had longer hair than the coast tribes. Some men whom we passed had an immense quantity of curly black hair, resembling that of some of the South Sea Islanders. I was sometimes puzzled to know at first sight whether the people we passed were men or women. The dress varies very little, the hair of both being done up in a number of knots; and as the men have but little whisker or beard, and have a practice of plucking out what does grow, there was little by which to distinguish the sexes.

Not only were the people different in appearance, but the dwellings also had a much more civilised look. Several of the houses at Ambòdin-angàvo were of the true Hova type, with high-pitched roofs, made of strong timber frame-work, and filled in with thick upright planking, instead of the slight bamboos and leaves of the coast houses. They were boarded inside, and had other rooms above the ground floor. The rafters at the gables are carried up for two or three feet above the ridge, and the ends rudely carved—the first attempt at architectural adornment I had seen in Madagascar. The house at which I stayed had a much more comfortable appearance than any I had been in before, having two rooms on the ground-floor, the walls covered with matting, and actually chairs!—a luxury I had not seen since leaving Tamatave. I felt that I was getting near civilisation again.

It was some time before all the luggage came up, and as I could not ask about it, I was obliged to wait until the last

case was brought in, and the captain announced "zab," meaning "the lot." While dinner was preparing I strolled out into a ravine near the house, and was struck with the beauty and variety of the insects, as indeed I had been in many parts of the journey. There are butterflies of gorgeous hues, dragonflies, grasshoppers of exquisite beauty, and the very spiders with coats of gold and silver. These latter were of enormous size; we saw hundreds of them in the middle of their large geometric webs as we came along. Some of the larger lines forming the main structure of the web are very strong and tough, requiring an effort to break them. Some of these spiders bite so severely as to cause large swellings on the part attacked, and two small species are said to be so venomous as to cause death in two or three hours.* I was astonished one day to see some bushes covered with enormous caterpillars, five or six inches long, in a gorgeous livery of black, yellow, and scarlet. I was unable to ascertain whether the moth or butterfly is the more abundant, but there are some very large slow-flying butterflies, one of which measures eight inches across the extended wings.

Reading the psalms and lessons for the day, and one of St. Paul's epistles, closed this most strange Sabbath—the seventh away from home and all the happy associations of Christian worship. I felt rejoiced in anticipating that, all being well, on the next Sunday I should be again permitted to join in public worship with English Christians, and was glad to think that my long yet rapid journey of seven weeks was nearly finished. I could not but earnestly hope and pray that to the country which I had passed through, now lying in heathen darkness, the time might soon come

* See Appendix B.: "Notes on the Natural History of the Island."

when in every village one house, at least, might be dedicated to the worship of the "only true God" and His divine Son; and that "these valleys and rocks," which, as yet, had "never heard the sound of the church-going bell," might become vocal with songs of praise, and witness numbers keeping holy day and learning the way of salvation.

Monday, October 12.—We left the village before sunrise, and immediately began the ascent of Angàvo, one of the highest hills in this part of the island. It is an enormous mass of granite, capped with clay, the summit scarped and fortified with earthworks. The hill was a fortress of the Bézànozàno, and was long besieged by Radàma I.; and it was only from his being possessed of firearms that he was able to subdue its defenders, and reduce the surrounding country under his authority. Angàvo is, however, not a detached hill rising from a plain on every side, but rather a vast natural bastion or outwork of a higher plateau of country.* There was a gorgeous sunrise, which covered the greater part of the sky with a perfectly crimson light, unlike anything I have ever seen before or since; and we were thankful that we had to climb the hill at that early and cool time of the day, for it was one of the longest and steepest ascents in the whole journey. Then, for another hour or two, it was the same work as on Thursday—through a part of the forest, scaling the ascents and then descending into the gorge. One place especially, where we crossed a small river, was a perfect combination of beauty, with the rushing waters, luxuriant foliage of fern and palm and bamboo, and hundreds of large butterflies hovering over the stream.

At eight o'clock we got to Ankàri-madinikia, and stayed

* See page 86.

for a few minutes while my bearers bought manioc-root and other refreshments at the village market. I did not get out of the palanquin, but numbers of people came round me, offering various articles of food for sale—sweet potatoes, honeycomb, and wild raspberries. I did not stay longer, expecting to get to Ambàtomànga, the last station, for breakfast, and to reach Antanànarìvo in the evening; but hill after hill was passed, and although numbers of villages were seen, none of them was the one we wanted. We had at last left behind us the region of forest, and were now on the bare open uplands of Imérina. The hills were less steep and more rounded and bare, reminding me of some parts of the English chalk-downs. In many places, however, enormous masses of grey limestone or granite appeared cropping out of their sides, and in several instances rising to great heights. For many miles I could see them rising high over every other hill; two especially might have been taken for vast churches, and others for Titanic castles, with towers and walls, so steeply do they rise up.

There were signs of approaching the capital in the number of villages which came in sight. The country also was much more cultivated—chiefly, however, in the valleys, where the bright green patches of rice gave a refreshing contrast to the brown and bare appearance of the hill-sides. These latter were now parched for want of moisture, for it was getting towards the close of the dry and cold season, when there is hardly any rain for more than five months. In many places great black patches showed where the grass and ferns had been set on fire. This is done shortly before the rains come on, and the rank coarse grass is succeeded by a crop of fine short herbage, suitable for pasture.

I began to fear we should not reach the capital that day,

as I had fully anticipated, for it was noon before we caught sight of Ambàtomànga, then two or three miles distant. This place has a very important and picturesque appearance, being considerably larger than any other town on the road. Over a number of smaller dwellings, one large house rises conspicuous, with its lofty high-pitched roof and double verandah. To the north of the town, but close to it, is a lofty pile of blue basalt rock, probably a couple of hundred feet in height, and crowned with a stone tomb and other buildings, which, at a distance, give it the air of a fortification. With a little trouble it could be made an almost impregnable citadel. Coming near to the town we saw, at some little distance, a large number of people seated on the ground in a circle, and, from the number of spears, I thought at first that it must be a *kabàry*, or council of war. But it proved to be a perfectly peaceful assemblage, being a large weekly market, at which several hundred people were present from the country round, busily engaged in buying and selling rice, poultry, and other articles of food, as well as of native manufacture. My men stopped here for some time, buying for me and for themselves, and at last about one o'clock we entered the last station on the road to Antanànarìvo.

Ambàtomànga has quite the air of a fortified town, having walls of clay surrounding it, and deep fosses or moats. I stopped at the large house which I had noticed at first, and found it to have much more of architectural pretension than anything I had yet seen. A large verandah surrounded it, supported on timber posts, and carrying a gallery at the level of the second storey, with good moulded cornices, and framing to the walls. Venetian shutters and panelled and framed doors gave it quite a civilised appearance after the mere sheds in which I had

been sleeping for so many nights past. The house was divided into three rooms on the ground-floor, the centre one being the largest; a lofty and good-sized apartment, with boarded floor, walls, and ceiling, all planed and well-finished. The owner—a fine-looking man (whom I afterwards found to be connected with the royal family) with a

CHIEF'S HOUSE AT AMBÀTOMÀNGA.

very English-looking and intelligent countenance—gave me a welcome in a little broken English. It was, however, too scanty to allow of much conversation, and finding he made use of some French words, I tried him in that language, but with similar results. His knowledge of European

tongues was apparently confined to about a dozen short phrases; for he repeatedly said "Tank you, sir," giving me a hearty shake of the hand at the same time, as if he thought that was the proper formula to be observed.

I breakfasted in an hour or two's time (at three o'clock), in public, as I had often done before, being apparently an object of great interest to a number of children and women, who assembled at the open door to observe the foreigner, and learn something of "ye manners and customs of ye English." I had, however, become accustomed to this, and did not feel at all discomposed by the attentions paid to me. At Ambàtomànga, travellers to the capital generally begin to prepare for a more civilised state of society than they have met with on the road; so I mowed away a beard which had had free course since leaving Tamatave, and finding in the house a large soup-plate, persuaded myself that it was a washhand-basin. Our ablutions had generally been performed at some of the rivers we crossed, or at springs near the villages, but the soup-plate was a decided advance upon these primitive arrangements. My proceedings appeared to give great interest to the score or two of people collected round the door, who viewed my operations for getting more presentable with great curiosity. During the last few days I had felt that I was making considerable "advances back" towards the original savage and his ways, and half inclined to believe that there was some foundation for the theory that we had emerged originally from such a state.

A little before dusk I walked out with the chief to visit the castle-like tomb on the top of the rock. From here there was a grand view in the light of the setting sun; the hills of red clay gave back the warm rays with an intensity of colour quite new to me. The tomb on the top was a

large stone structure, well worked, with a sort of open balustrade and bold mouldings. Upon it was a small wooden house built for the spirit of the departed, this kind of structure being only found over the tombs of the Andrians, or members of the royal clans. It was protected by lightning-conductors, giving it much the appearance of being a small powder-magazine. Walking round the house after dusk, I was surprised to see a lurid glare in the sky on all sides. On examining the cause, I found it was produced by the grass burning on the hills, which showed out in lines of fire for many miles distant in every direction.

Tuesday, October 13.—With a glad heart I took my seat in the palanquin soon after six o'clock, rejoiced to think that this was the last stage in my long journey, and that when I alighted it would be at Antanànarivo. About three-quarters of an hour after leaving Ambàtomànga we caught our first sight of the capital, twelve or fourteen miles distant. There it was—a great city, far larger than I had supposed, and different from any place I had ever seen before,—on its lofty rocky hill, a mile and a half long, covered with houses; and in the centre the enormous bulk of the great palace, with its arched verandahs and steep roof, all painted white, and shining in the morning sun, towering over every other object. There are some moments in our lives which stamp themselves indelibly in the memory, and are different from any we afterwards experience, and such were those few minutes when I first saw Antanànarivo. What a host of dim vague ideas of faith and constancy, and courage and devotion, of which that city had been the scene, arose to my mind! I could hardly realise the fact that within the last few years those heights had been consecrated by the blood of martyrs, and had witnessed a loyalty to Christ and to conscience worthy of the best ages

of the Church. And then, as I remembered that my work there was to raise lasting memorials in imperishable granite to these Christian confessors, I felt as if it were all a dream. But as I rode along and read, as I generally did, the Psalms for the day, how like a new voice, full of support and encouragement, did those words in the 68th Psalm seem, "Thy God hath sent forth *strength* for thee!"

On we went, over the long rolling moorlike hills, losing sight of the city every now and then, and presently coming in view of it as we mounted the ridges. In my impatience it seemed as if we got no nearer, although of course every few minutes brought out more of the details of the place, and revealed its masses of dark houses clustered on the sides of the rocky hill. There were numbers of people in the roads, and more signs of civilisation in the stone bridges by which we crossed several streams. I was struck with the great number of villages to be seen in every direction, many of them enclosed in walls of red clay, laid with a good deal of care, in regular courses, and apparently very hard and durable. The houses also were all built of the same material, and many of them were enclosed in circular or square-shaped courtyards with ornamental gateways. Many of the villages were surrounded with deep fosses, and some with walls and stone gateways, which gave one the impression that there must formerly have been a great deal of internal warfare to need such elaborate defences.

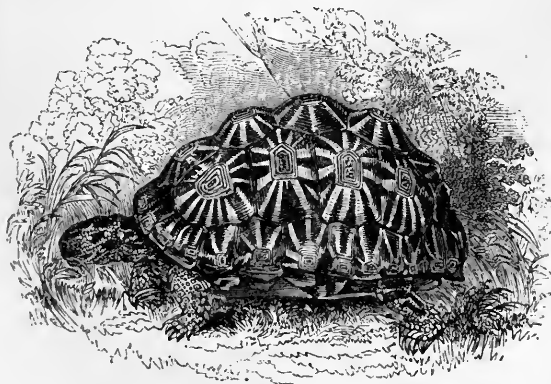
The large amount of land under cultivation was very observable, especially compared with the country we had passed through; the valleys were green with rice, and the uplands planted with root-crops and vegetables. Within a mile or two of the city we passed for a quarter of an hour through a perfect cloud of locusts, which covered the ground and filled the air. I began to realise one of the

plagues of Egypt. Many varieties of this insect are common in Madagascar, and occasionally they cause great destruction to the crops.

As we got nearer and nearer I could not but wonder at the picturesque and grand site of Antanànarìvo, and its size, so much greater than I had been prepared for. About a mile from the foot of the hill, my men suddenly brought me into an inclosure of clay walls, with a small house or two in the area, and set me down. A large number of Hova officers and soldiers were assembled there. Entering the house I found M. Laborde, the French consul, with his secretaries, and two Malagasy officers, gorgeous in blue uniforms and gold lace, who had been sent to escort the consul into the city. M. Laborde had left Tamatave more than a week before me, and had only just arrived at the capital. He was bearing despatches from Commodore Dupré with reference to the disputed Lambert treaty. He informed me that it would be necessary to apprise the government of my arrival, and that I must wait until permission was sent to enter the city. Presently, the whole party set off in their palanquins, with the band playing, up the steep and rough road leading into Antanànarìvo.

Here I waited for two hours, wondering how long I should be detained. At last I was delighted to see an English face, and to be able to use my tongue again after a silence of three or four days. It was one of the missionaries, who had been looking out for me; and finding that there was no necessity for any further delay, we set off together, and in a few minutes were ascending into the city by some of the most breakneck paths I ever traversed, not excepting the worst parts of the forest. In some places the road was merely a rough and steep stair cut out of the rock. Few of the streets are any better; in fact, there are

only two roads at all passable, and these are very rugged, the rock being blasted away to open a path. However, we soon reached the upper part of the city, and in a few minutes were set down at Dr. Davidson's house, at the corner of the large triangular space called Andohàlo, where a market is held, and the national councils, or kabarys, are convened. Here I received a hearty welcome from Dr. and Mrs. Davidson, and in a short time also from the rest of the missionary brethren, who came as soon as they heard of my arrival. With a glad and thankful heart I found myself at last in the capital of Madagascar, after a long and yet a rapid journey from England; with cheerful anticipations of being able to do something in the service of Him who had protected me thus far, and grateful, I trust, for a thousand mercies vouchsafed in travelling, both by land and sea.



GEOMETRIC TORTOISE.

CHAPTER V.

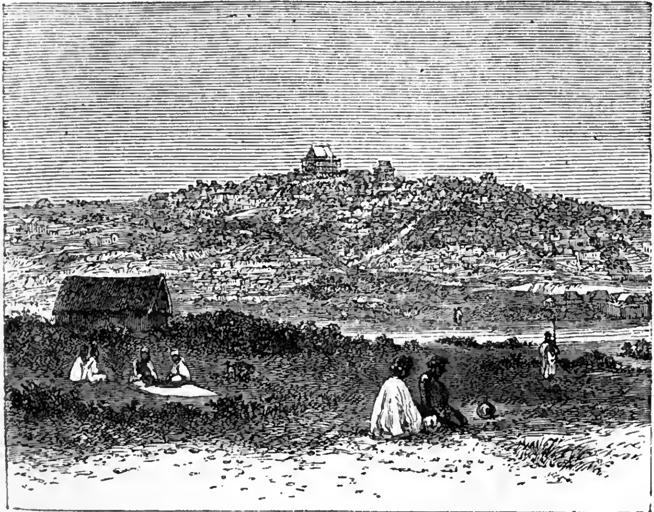
ANTANÀNARÌVO, THE "CITY OF A THOUSAND TOWNS."

Picturesque situation of capital—Height of city hill—Few large buildings—View of city from east—Ambòhipòtsy—Memorial church—Stone house—Radàma's good intentions—Roman Catholic chapel—Prince Ramònja's house—Royal palaces—Fàravòhitra memorial church—Steep roads into city—Few streets—Ancient gateway—Malagasy soldiers—English words of command—Extensive views from summit of hill—Andohàlo—Great place of meeting—Native church—Roman Catholic mission buildings—Ancient fig-trees—Cannon—Ambòhijànabàry—Plain of Imàhamàsina—Sacred stone—European burial-ground—Lake and queen's summer-house—Gardens near the city—Central school—Printing-offices—Paved roadway—Ambàtonakànga and its memorial church—Opening—Market system—Visit to Zomà—Native productions and manufactures—Slave market—Government workshops—Mission hospital—Sanitary condition—Water-supply of city.

THE bold and picturesque situation of the capital of Madagascar has already been spoken of. It is hardly possible to conceive of a more commanding position for a capital than its site affords. It must, however, be allowed that the external advantage of situation is counterbalanced by its difficulty of access; for the steepness of the sides of the hill makes it almost impossible to construct a road which would be practicable for vehicles, did any such exist.

Antanànarìvo is built upon the summit and slopes of a long and lofty hill of granite and basalt rock, which rises from a comparatively level part of the province of Imérina. This hill stretches from north to south for a distance of nearly a mile and a half, and rises to a height of about 500 feet above the plain. The southern, eastern, and western sides rise steep and abrupt from the level, but

the northern end branches into two arms or divisions which slope down to the plain by long and easy inclinations The ground is most precipitous on the western side. At one point the cliffs are perpendicular, and even overhanging; great masses of rock jut out, and enormous fragments are strewn about far below, showing that at a recent period



VIEW OF THE EAST SIDE OF ANTANÀNARÌVO.
From a Photograph by Rev. W. Ellis.

a landslip had occurred. This is said to have been caused by the shock of an earthquake which shook the city and the surrounding country between twenty and thirty years ago.

For several miles around there is no other hill having anything like the size or height of that on which Antanànarìvo is built. To the south and north for ten or twelve

miles there is a comparatively level country, and to the west and north-west a perfectly flat plain for a considerable distance. Owing to this, the city hill is a most conspicuous object from many parts of Imérina, and from certain points of the country to the west: at a distance of more than forty miles, we distinctly saw it, with the lofty white roofs of the palace shining in the afternoon sunlight. It is probably visible for a much greater distance from some of the hills to the north-west, and also from the Ankàratra mountains in the south-west; for whenever we catch a glimpse of the city it is at once recognised by the vast bulk of the palaces towering over every other object. The air in these elevated central regions of Madagascar is wonderfully clear and bright, and objects can be seen at immense distances with a precision and sharpness of outline unknown, or very rarely seen, in our damp and misty northern atmosphere.

Approaching Antanànarìvo from the east—the side from which it is generally seen by foreigners for the first time—we see the steep eastern declivities and slopes covered with a dark mass of houses, placed without any apparent order or arrangement, which, indeed, is almost impossible from the nature of the ground. Few buildings, except the palaces, are conspicuous from the rest, for those houses which are of timber are unpainted, and soon become of a dark neutral tint; while their steep roofs, thatched with the *hèrana*, or triangular rush—or, in the case of some of the larger houses, composed of wooden shingles or clay tiles—are equally dark and monotonous in colour. The houses on the lower parts of the hill, which are mostly of clay, are also generally uncoloured, so that at a distance there is little to distinguish them from the ground on which and out of which they are built.

The city, therefore, owes but little of its striking character to man's handiwork; its picturesqueness arises almost entirely from its natural position. Still, the sky-line is broken by two or three lofty houses, and within the last year or two, a striking addition has been made to the external appearance of Antanànarìvo by the erection, on most conspicuous points at each extremity of the city hill, of granite churches as memorials of the Christian devotion and courage of those who gave up their lives for Christ's sake during the years of persecution.

Let us halt for a few moments in our journey to the capital, and from a point about a mile distant to the eastward, take notice of its main features and outline. Beginning at the southern end, which rises abruptly at an angle of 45°, or even steeper, from the plain, we see on the summit the spire and roofs of the memorial church at Ambòhipòtsy. This word means "white village," and the place is so called from the light-coloured rock and earth of which this part of the hill is composed. Hardly a house is built on its steep slopes, which form an inexhaustible granite quarry for the surrounding neighbourhood.

This church is built within a few yards of the spot where Ràsalàma, an heroic young Christian woman, the proto-martyr of Madagascar, was put to death by spearing in 1837, at the commencement of that reign of terror which lasted for more than five-and-twenty years, and only terminated with the death of Queen Rànavàlona. Many others afterwards suffered at the same place, which was a common execution-ground until a very recent period. So narrow is the ridge at this point that there was barely room to get in the foundations of the church, and it had to be kept somewhat narrower than was intended from this cause.

Following with the eye the line of the ridge, we come next to a long low structure which hardly breaks the sky-line, for it is built on a terrace below the crest of the hill. It is, however, remarkable as being the only stone building in Antanànarìvo, with the exception of the memorial churches. It is known as the Stone House, and has a melancholy interest from being connected with the name of the misguided young king Radàma II.; being at once a monument of his good deeds and good intentions, and of his terrible fall into follies and sins which involved the loss both of his crown and his life. It has no architectural beauty, being built as plainly as possible; but it differs from almost every structure ever erected by a Malagasy sovereign, in the fact that it was not built by compulsory labour. The workmen were paid for their work by the king, who had an innate instinct for doing what was just and fair to his subjects. He seems to have had an intention of making the building a kind of higher-class school, at which the sons of the nobles and chief officers might receive advanced instruction in various branches of knowledge. For a short time it was used to some extent for this purpose; on the Sundays divine service was held there, and on weekdays also the king listened to religious teaching. But the evil influences which surrounded him were too strong for his good resolutions, and the Stone House became the scene of drunken revelling and frightful licentiousness, which contributed to the melancholy and untimely reversal of all the bright hopes which his accession had awakened.

At a little distance nearer to the palace is an odd-looking structure, of which the end only is visible from the east. This is one of the Roman Catholic places of worship—a substantial building of clay, with the clerestory, or centre,

rising high above the aisles, and with a flat tile-covered roof. It has been compared to a toy Noah's Ark, and at a distance has but little to denote its ecclesiastical character. Close to this point, the ground rises abruptly forty or fifty feet; and to this part of the hill the rhymes on the old London Stone might be applied—

> "When you have sought the city round,
> Yet still this is the highest ground;"

for it is the most elevated point in Antanànarivo, exceeding the platform on which the palaces are built by a height of twenty or thirty feet. The ground here is the property of the family of the late Prince Ramònja. He was a near relative of the former queen, Rànavàlona, and suffered much on account of his Christianity—being degraded from his high position to the ranks, and obliged to carry a musket as a common soldier.

The royal palaces next attract attention. They are grouped together in a large courtyard, and, large and small buildings included, are about a dozen in number. By far the largest of all structures, either in the capital or in the island, is the chief palace, Manjàka-Miàdana. It is about 100 feet long by 80 feet broad, and is 120 feet high to the apex of its lofty roof, which is hipped, or sloping, on all four sides. From the ridge rise two slender lightning-conductors, of the form seen on many French buildings. A wide verandah in three storeys runs all round the palace, and is supported by enormous posts, between which are semicircular arches in wood. All is painted white — walls, roof, and verandah — except the balustrading.

Close to the chief palace, at the north-east angle, rises the second in size, the Tràno-Vòla, or Silver House. It is

about two-thirds the size of its neighbour, but is rather better finished. It has a verandah of two storeys only, and the body of the building is coloured red, the roof and verandah being white. A number of other houses surround the chief buildings. To the south are some ancient structures built by the first kings of the present reigning family, and with the enormously high-pitched roofs and long projecting horns at the gables peculiar to the old Malagasy type of house. Although very lofty, they are quite thrown into the shade by the size of the more modern palaces. East of the great Manjàka-Miàdana is the new palace built by the present queen, and opened in the spring of the year 1867. In any other part of the city this would be a conspicuous object; but its beautifully-carved gables and verandahs are little noticed, being hidden and overshadowed by the other royal buildings. A mass of verdure on the eastern side of the *ròva*, or courtyard, shows the position of the palace gardens, and affords a refreshing contrast to the monotonous brown of the house-roofs, and the clay walls in the greater part of the city.

Around the royal courtyard are grouped a number of large houses, built very much in the same style as the palaces, but of less dimensions, and unpainted. These are the residences of the chief officers of the army and of the court, the secretaries of state, and other members of the government. Apart from these, two other very lofty houses alone break the line of the ridge, one of them being only two or three hundred yards to the north of the palace, and belonging to the queen's father; the other, a quarter of a mile farther on, is one of several occupied by different members of the prime minister's family.

For some distance there is nothing else to break the monotony of numberless roofs, more or less resembling one

another. From the palace-yard the ground gradually falls by long and gentle slopes to the northward. The easternmost of the two branches into which the hill divides, and which is the only one visible from this point, is but thinly inhabited. At its highest point, at Fàravòhitra (that is, "last village"), rises conspicuously one of the mission residences, and a few hundred feet farther on is the square outline of the third memorial church, erected by funds subscribed by English children. This building stands upon the very spot where four Malagasy Christians were put to death, in 1849, by being burnt alive. This was during one of the most violent of those outbursts of persecuting fury which so often marked the reign of Rànavàlona. The church will be visible for a great distance to the north, as well as east and west; and will be easily reached by the gradual descent which leads down to the level of the plain from Fàravòhitra. From the east, a large part of the city and some of its most populous suburbs are hidden by the intervening hill: the first memorial church, the mission hospital, the queen's lake and summer-house, and the largest native chapels, are on the western side, and out of sight from this point of view.

Let us ascend by the eastern road, which leads up to the summit of the city by a steep and tortuous ascent. Passing a little market at the foot of the hill, we toil up the rough and rocky road, pausing every few minutes to take breath, and wondering what our friends at home would think of such paths in one of the chief towns in England. Yet this is really one of the best roads in the city. In many places the basalt rock has been blasted away to form a path, and the road is roughly paved with blocks of stone. The heavy rains of the wet season undermine these in many places, and about halfway up, at the steepest point,

the torrents of water from the higher parts of the city have hollowed out a cleft six or seven feet deep, into which, after rain, a small cataract pours and foams, making it not a little difficult to get along the road at night, when the rains generally fall.

There is a peculiarity in the appearance of Antanàna-rìvo, as seen from this side, which must strike everyone who first approaches it from Tamatave; and that is, that, with the exception of a very few modern houses, no windows or doors are visible, as they are all placed on the western side of the buildings. In Imérina and the Bétsilèo country, the houses are always built with the length running north and south. The doors are placed on the western side, so as to protect the inmates from the south-east trade-wind, which blows nearly all through the year, and in the winter months is sufficiently cold to make some protection necessary. As glass is an article of modern introduction, and is still a luxury confined chiefly to the rich, the windows are closed only by wooden shutters, and are also placed almost exclusively on the western side and in the gable of the roof at the northern end, although in some cases there is also another on the ground-floor facing the north.

The different localities are not, as in European cities, defined by the names of streets and roads, but by various descriptions which serve to point out with tolerable accuracy the position of most houses in the city. These are sometimes spoken of as north, south, east, or west of various places which are conspicuous and well known—as the palace-yard; Àndohàlo, the assembly-ground; Zomà, the great market, and the different gates. The names of some neighbourhoods are evidently derived from those small villages which in early times were scattered over the hill-sides before they became joined together by the increase

of population, and united to form the capital. The name of the city, Antanànarìvo, literally "at the thousand towns," or villages, shows that the present metropolis is but the aggregation of a number of small hamlets which gradually covered the rocky sides and slopes of the city hill.*

Except some half-dozen main roads, there is little answering to our idea of a street in Antanànarìvo. The houses are not placed together in rows, nor would it be possible to do so were it the custom of the Malagasy in other places. The great majority of dwellings are in groups of from two or three to half a dozen or more, in a courtyard by themselves. In some more level parts of the city they are crowded together, and there is but little space between; but these pieces of ground, or *tòkòtany*, as they are called, are mostly formed by cutting away the sides of the hill, where the rock allows it, and with the soil thus removed filling in the lower parts to make the ground level. The greater part of the city, therefore, consists of a series of terraces formed out of the steep sides of the declivities; and in two or three places, especially at the head of the valley which separates the two northern divisions of the hill, these steps or terraces have very much the appearance of an ancient theatre of vast dimensions, with its semicircular rows of seats.

The only piece of level ground of any extent, is just above the point where these two arms of the city hill divide, and leave a triangular space called Andohàlo, of eight or ten acres in area, where the kabàrys, or national assemblies, are convened. In many parts of Antanànarìvo

* Some say the meaning is rather, "town of a thousand," while one of my missionary friends suggests that there is some other meaning, now lost, of the word *arivo*, forming part of the name of so many towns in Madagascar.

access can only be obtained to a great number of the houses by narrow and rugged pathways between the enclosing walls of the courtyards, and in some places there are not even these means of communication, but we are obliged to climb over the low clay walls from one inclosure to the other.

The houses in the lower parts of the city, and also at the northern and southern extremities of the upper portion, are built of clay (as are almost all the villages and houses in the country), but these are outside the city proper. Inside the boundary all are, and must be, of wood or bamboo, and must not be either of stone, earth, or brick.* There is no strongly-marked division between these two, except in some places where deep fosses have been formed, partly natural and partly artificial, but at all the roads entering the city there is a small guard-house which marks the boundary. Only one of the ancient gateways remains, and this is at Ankàdibévàva, about two-thirds of the way up from the plain to the crest of the hill. The other approaches were all probably defended by similar structures; but as, in English towns, the old bar-gates have in many cases been removed, so at Antanànarìvo, one only remains to show the nature of these ancient defences. The name An-kàdi-bé-vàva—meaning "at the fosse with the great mouth" or entrance—is applied not only to the gate, but also to the district surrounding it. The structure is also called Am-báva-hàdy-mitàfo, that is, "the roofed gateway," from its being covered with a roof thatched in the same manner as the houses. The gate is built of thin tile-like pieces of basalt rock, laid very neatly and evenly without mortar. It is seven or eight feet deep, and about eight feet high inside, the angles being composed

* Since writing the above this law has been repealed.

of long square pieces of rock firmly fixed in the earth, and the lintel formed of slabs of blue rock, above which is the thatching, now considerably out of repair. Inside the entrance is an enormous circular piece of basalt, like an immense millstone, so placed that it could be rolled across the opening in a rude kind of groove, and in time of war present an effectual barrier to the entrance of an enemy.

This gate is almost the only ancient structure which the city possesses, except a few tombs, and portions of the walls of an old house at Ampàribé, formerly the residence of the petty chief who made Antanànarìvo his headquarters. This house was constructed of thin slabs of stone laid regularly without mortar, in the same manner as the gateway. This kind of masonry probably dates from the time when the chief of Antanànarìvo was but one of many who divided the authority over this part of Imérina amongst them, and long before the period when the ancestors of the present reigning family had become sovereigns of Madagascar, or even of the central province. The gate at Ankàdibévàva, therefore, has most likely been in existence for nearly two hundred years.

A few paces below the gateway, on the right-hand side as we ascend, is a large native chapel—a clay building, plain externally, but neat and commodious within, and capable of holding five or six hundred people. Opposite to it, on the left-hand side of the way, a wooden cross over a gateway marks the position of a school-house belonging to the Roman Catholic mission.

In the little clay hut or guard-house at the side of the gateway are always stationed two or three Malagasy soldiers, with a petty officer. But the first sight of these native troops does not inspire a foreigner with much admiration for their appearance or discipline. Instead of

the regular monotonous march of an English or European sentry on guard, in full uniform, with bayonet fixed, these soldiers are squatting idly on the ground, with but scanty clothing, consisting merely of a piece of cloth round the loins, and a coarse and dirty hemp or ròfia *lamba* over the shoulders. Sometimes a pair of old crossbelts, from which the pipeclay has long since departed, contrast strangely with their brown chests; although, together with a cartouche-box dangling loosely at the side, they give some hint at an idea of uniform and European influences. Half-a-dozen old flint-lock Tower muskets are piled up at the corner of the guard-house, while the officer on duty carries a rough-looking sword of native manufacture. They take little notice of us as we go through, but if a native officer chance to pass in or out, the captain, who wears a straw hat, and perhaps a shirt, in addition to the native dress, calls out the guard; and the stranger would be startled to hear the familiar English words of command, "Attention," "Present arms," etc., as the musket is shouldered and the salute given. These foreign words are used because the Malagasy army was first drilled and organised by English officers, who, finding no native words suitable to express military evolutions, introduced their own words of command, which have remained in use ever since.

Passing through the gateway, the chief road turns sharply round to the left, and ascends the hill obliquely to a point not far from the gate of the royal courtyard. Deferring for the present our visit to the palace, let us keep straight on along a narrow and extremely rough and awkward path, which runs for most of the way between walls, and now and then over the bare rock which crops up in many parts of the city. Our bearers toil along the rugged path, but in a few minutes we reach the summit and begin to

descend. To the left are a number of large houses, belonging to the prime minister and other influential officers. On the right is a small plain chapel of wood, used by one of the city congregations. This part is called Ambòhitantély, that is, "the village of honey," probably preserving in the name a remembrance of a time long passed away, when houses were few on these heights and wild flowers plentiful, and the bee found in hollow trees and holes in the rocks a hiding-place for his store of sweet spoils.

Before us opens a glorious and extensive view to the west; but let us turn round, to view from this elevation of four or five hundred feet, the road we have been traversing from Ambàtomànga. West, north, and east, we can see for an immense distance; to the south only is the view interrupted by the city and palace, which rise still higher than the point where we are standing. Far below us, in the valley, are the level rice-fields, and especially do the exquisite green terraces of the *kètsa*, or planting-grounds, in the hollow of the hills, arrest the eye, and form a refreshing contrast to the brown and red of the soil, which is but thinly covered with grass after five months without rain. We can see the path winding away for many miles, up and down the rounded hills. In the far distance are the angular and picturesque shapes of those rocky peaks which we saw before reaching Ambàtomànga, shining white in the sunlight and sharply defined against the blue sky, like some vast ruins of castles and cathedrals. Many of the higher hills are covered with a grove of trees, chiefly the *àviàvy*, a species of Indian fig, around and beneath which the houses are clustered, but mostly too far off to be recognised without a glass. Many of these are sacred villages and former capitals of petty states.

This view to the east is always varied and interesting.

One gets a feeling of freedom from its extent and the boldness of its open breezy hills; but its most beautiful aspect is a little before sunset. Then the warmer rays of the setting sun light up the red clay of the ground, and give a gorgeous glow of colour—crimson and purple in all their shades and gradations,—which I have never seen equalled in any other place.

To the north, about five miles distant, is the wooded hill of Ilàfy, which has a mournful interest from its being the burialplace of Radàma II. In the same direction, but at double the distance, is the long, lofty, wood-covered, and rock-crowned hill, the seat of the old capital, Ambòhimànga, the burialplace of Rànavàlona and of former monarchs, and one of the three sacred places from which, until very recently, Europeans were excluded.

Following the horizon round to the west, are lines of distant mountains—Andrìngitra, the pretended abode of one of the chief idols; Ambòhidrapèto, the traditionary residence of the giant Rapèto; while to west and north-west stretches for many miles the level fertile plain of Bétsimitàtatra, green with its rice-fields, resembling an immense meadow when the crops are newly planted, and the rice at harvest-time waving in the breeze like the barley in an English cornfield. From this rich plain the inhabitants of the capital derive the chief part of their subsistence. The perfect level of its surface is only broken here and there by low hills of red clay, which rise out of the green fields like islands from a sea. At two or three miles' distance winds the river Ikiòpa, from which the whole of the valleys in the neighbourhood are watered by means of a very perfect system of irrigation. The river rises to the north-east of the city, skirts the plain to south and west, and disappears in the far distance in the north-west, on its

way to join the Bétsibòka, which falls into the Mozambique Channel at Mojangà.

Distant lines of hills, broken by two or three prominent peaks, bound the prospect to the west. More southerly is the range of the Ankàratra mountains, lofty and dark with forests, a branch of that great chain of hills which forms the backbone of the island. This elevated range is supposed to be the highest part of the whole country, and incloses Imérina like a great rampart on the west and south. Some of the highest points are probably fifty or sixty miles distant, yet, with a glass, the trees on the summit, and details of the surface, can be seen with a distinctness very surprising to eyes accustomed only to northern skies and atmosphere.

Resuming our palanquins we proceed towards Andohàlo, descending to it by a winding path, close to the residence of the prime minister. The courtyard of his house has almost the air of a fortified place, being built up with massive blocks of basalt, to a height of twenty or thirty feet above the roadway. Before us is the large triangular space where the kabàrys, or national parliaments, are convened. It is somewhat hollow in the centre, so that it forms a sort of rude amphitheatre; and as the courtyards of the houses all round it rise still higher, a vast number of people are able to witness the proceedings in these assemblies. As many as 30,000 people are frequently collected to hear new laws promulgated, or a message brought by high officers from the queen, announcing some measures of state policy which have been determined upon by the government.

This large open space forms a convenient place of meeting for transacting public business of all kinds, and as few days pass without some people coming from distant parts of the island as representatives of the various tribes, and

to bring tribute to the sovereign, there are generally numbers of people squatting on the grass in groups and discussing the news of the day. The Malagasy, like the Athenians, are very fond of "hearing and telling some new thing," and Àndohàlo is their club, lounging-place, and newsroom. To an English mind there is an appearance of idleness and disregard for time, very opposed to our express-speed style of doing business. Reviews of troops sometimes take place here, and when the queen returns in state from her yearly visit to Ambòhimànga, and from other journeys, Andohàlo presents a very gay and lively scene, with two or three thousand troops under arms, officers in gorgeous uniforms, and the queen and court in their state dress.

Near the centre of the open area a small space may be observed where no grass grows. On looking closely we see that the bare blue rock here comes to the surface. This spot is the sacred stone, and is invested with a half-political, half-religious significance; for upon returning to the capital the sovereign alights here, and standing upon the rock repeats some form of prayer or thanksgiving for being allowed to re-enter the city in peace.

Proceeding to the northern corner of the triangle, we see on the right hand a large native church, built of wood, in a kind of domestic Gothic style, somewhat resembling the timber architecture of old English country-houses. It has transepts and bell-turret, and carved barge-boards at the gables, with traceried windows in the chief fronts. It is in a most admirable situation, amongst a large population in the heart of the city, and most convenient of access, and is occupied by an earnest and liberal congregation. The ground was bought by them at a high price, considering the great relative value of money in Madagascar.

Opposite to the church is a house used as a consulate by Mr. Pakenham when he visits the capital; and next to that is a large and commodious house, built in the style common at Mauritius, and roofed with corrugated iron. The tricolor flag flying from a staff, shows this to be the residence of M. Laborde, the French consul. This gentleman has been for more than thirty years a resident in the country, and has introduced many useful arts and manufactures amongst the Malagasy. He has had the confidence of the government and sovereign of Madagascar for a long period, and is very generally respected.

Past M. Laborde's residence, Andohàlo narrows to the breadth of a roadway, which runs for a few hundred yards along the edge of the ridge, having houses to the right, and on the left a steep precipice descending for three or four hundred feet to the plain below. Before coming to this we pass a square piece of water with buildings surrounding three of its sides. Opposite to the roadway is a long low structure of wood, with crosses on the gable and the gateway. This is the chief Roman Catholic chapel, and the headquarters of their mission in Madagascar. It has a curious appearance, being roofed with tiles in the centre, and with galvanised sheet-iron on the aisles. Close to the chapel are the houses of the priests, and workshops for the artisans connected with their mission. The schools and houses of the Sisters of Mercy are only two or three hundred yards distant, on the road leading to Fàravòhitra.

Proceeding along the roadway, we see that on the side next the precipice it is bordered by a number of *àviàvy* trees, which are probably two or three centuries old. Many of them are decaying, and will probably not last many more years. There are a considerable number of these old trees in the higher parts of the city, and they most

likely formed a prominent feature in its appearance, as in other ancient towns, before they were overtopped by the lofty palaces and houses. The fruit of the àviàvy is not at all tempting in appearance. It is hard, green, and indigestible-looking, something like a small pear; and the roughest wild crab would probably be more palatable. But the boys in Madagascar are very much like English boys in their power of enjoying and digesting the most unpromising substances, and the trees are generally stripped before the fruit has a chance of ripening.

Between these old trees are placed a number of cannon of various sizes—some lying on the ground, and others mounted on wooden carriages in various stages of decay. These pieces of artillery bear the English royal initials, G.R., and are mostly of Woolwich make. They were given to the first Radàma by our George IV., at the time when a treaty was concluded abolishing the slave-trade in Madagascar. The cannon give quite the air of a fortified place to this part of the town, but they would probably not be of much service in defence, for the Malagasy are not expert artillerymen. There are about thirty of them here, and as many more in other places in the upper part of the city. Their chief use now is for firing salutes on special occasions of rejoicing; at the entrance or departure of military officers of rank, or of the European consuls; or when important *kabàrys* are held. On the eve of the new year a salute is fired from all the cannon in the city, three times, during the ceremony of the queen's bathing. At the opening of the new palace, a volley was fired all through the night, at half-hour intervals. One of the cannon near the *ròva* gives the signal every morning for the workmen to assemble at the palace and other places where government work is in progress, and in the evening at half-past nine o'clock it

is fired again as a sort of curfew—after which people are not to be abroad, and lights and fires are to be extinguished in the houses.

It will be readily inferred from what has been said of the position of Antanànarìvo, that it is a city of beautiful prospects. Few places can afford so great a variety of picturesque scenes as does the capital, whether looking

ANTANÀNARÌVO FROM THE NORTH-WEST.
From a Photograph by Mr. J. Parrett.

towards the city from the plain, or from its heights; and there are few more striking views than this one from the road by the cannon. It always impresses a stranger who sees it for the first time, nor does familiarity take away

from its interest; for on this side of the city the charm which water always adds to a prospect is not wanting. Beginning at the extreme left, we see, through the bending round of this extremity of the hill, a large part of the western side of the city, with the palaces and great houses towering over all other objects. Not far below the palace may be distinguished the precipices of Ampàmarìnana, where many Christian martyrs met a violent death by being hurled from the summit and dashed to pieces on the rocks beneath. One of the memorial churches is being erected upon the spot, and a large and influential congregation has for some time been gathered together in a temporary building.

Due west from the palace, and connected with Antanànarìvo by a low ridge or isthmus, is a remarkable conical or dome-shaped hill, called Ambòhijànahàry, sometimes translated "Hill of God," but meaning rather the "created mount," as distinguished from anything made by man's handiwork. Its sides are scored by dark lines, which from this point appear like immense gashes on its curved slopes. A nearer examination shows them to be very deep fosses, which were cut by order of Radàma I.—some say in order to accustom his troops to attack and scale fortified places; and others, that it was his intention to cut down a large part of this hill to the level, and that these were the preliminary works. He did actually effect a work of this kind, but on a smaller scale, on a hill situated farther south, and built upon the space a palace, which is visible from this point, about a mile and a half distant. A populous suburb is growing up round the base of the hill, and in the courtyards of the houses can be seen not only the dwellings of the living, but large family tombs in the same inclosure.

Immediately beneath us, at the foot of the declivity—and so near that a stone could almost be thrown on its surface, although three or four hundred feet below—is a large and level grassy plain, called Imàhamàsina. It is almost a square and nearly half a mile in length, and lies spread before us like a map. It is the parade-ground for the troops; and when several thousand men are being drilled, as is frequently the case, it presents a very pretty scene. The columns of soldiers, in their white uniforms, moving in slow and quick time round the plain, and forming into great squares, contrast well with the green herbage and with the hundreds of spectators sitting upon the raised banks; and the picturesque accessories of the scene, all lighted up by brilliant sunshine, make a picture which never loses its interest by repetition.

Nearly in the centre of the parade-ground is a circular structure of stonework, eight or ten feet high by about twelve feet in diameter. This incloses a sacred stone, which gives a name to the plain, for *màhamàsina* means "to make sacred." It is probably a boulder of basalt rock which has been detached by natural causes from the higher part of the city hill, and has rolled thence to its present position. Some supposed sanctity has been attributed to this rock, and it is inclosed with masonry and plastered with lime. Upon the stone the sovereign formerly stood at the coronation, and demanded of the assembled multitudes whether he or she were not *màsina*, *i.e.*, consecrated, as their ruler; to which question they replied with shouts and expressions of loyalty and attachment.

At the foot of the hill is the European burial-ground, where some of the artisans and several children of those who were connected with the early mission sleep their last sleep. Here also lie the remains of Mr. Hastie, British agent in the

time of Radàma I., a man to whom Madagascar probably owes more than to any other single individual. The cessation of the slave-trade, the introduction of several of the useful arts, as well as many other public benefits, were due to his unwearied and disinterested exertions; and to his wise and humane counsels the kingdom owes a very large proportion of its present civilisation and advancement. The Rev. D. Tyerman was also interred here; he came to Madagascar after having visited most of the London Missionary Society's stations in all parts of the world, but succumbed to fever, induced by the fatigue of the journey from the coast, and died at the capital in July, 1828. Mr. Charles Stagg, the zealous superintendent of the Central School, also finds a last resting-place in this little cemetery. He died in February, 1864.

More to the northward is the populous suburb of Amparibé. In the midst of the houses is the large thatched roof of the native chapel, hardly distinguishable except by its size from the native dwellings. At this place is gathered together the largest congregation in the capital, the communicants numbering more than six hundred members. Below it are two of the mission residences, inclosed in a large garden, and at some distance beyond is a beautiful sheet of water called Anòsy. It is the property of the queen, and nearly in the centre is an island with summer-houses and gardens, connected with the mainland by a long narrow causeway. The lake is partly natural and partly artificial. It was deepened and enlarged, in order to form a reservoir for supplying the government powder-mills with water-power, and is kept full by a canal which communicates with the river Ikiòpa. There is a pleasant walk of nearly half an hour round this lake, and from the shore, at the farther side, the bold heights of the city show

with fine effect over the water, with the picturesque island and gardens in the midst.

Near the lake, a little to the northward, are the country-house and pleasant gardens of the French consul. The gardens are laid out in European style, with walks and clipped hedges and plantations. The hollows between the spurs of the main hill are often occupied by gardens planted with mango, bibasy, peach, banana, and other fruit trees, and form pleasant retreats from the stir of the city. The Malagasy are very fond of spending part of their time in these places, and many of them have houses erected there, so that they can stay during the time when their rice-crops are being gathered in. Farther to the north is the westernmost division of the hill, curving round to the plain by a gradual descent, and thickly covered with houses. At the farthest point, on a slightly rising ground, may be distinguished the tomb of the prime minister's family, with its stone arcades, and elegant lightning-conductors like minarets on a reduced scale.

Resuming our walk along the road to the northward, we pass on the right the Central School of the Protestant mission. It is a lofty and commodious timber building, and will accommodate two or three hundred children. The walls are hung with maps and pictures; and with its desks and fittings after the British School model, it has very much the appearance of an English school-house. This place is intended chiefly as an upper school, and especially as a training institution for teachers to supply the country places. This work was begun by Mr. Stagg in 1863, and although he was not permitted to carry it on for long, owing to his lamented death in the early part of the following year, yet the young men trained by him during that short time became teachers of most of the schools in

the capital, and one or two have since then gone to distant parts of the island as instructors of their countrymen. The ground on which the school stands is the site of the chapel where Mr. Griffiths, one of the first missionaries, preached for several years, and where a church and congregation were gathered together during the early days of the mission.

About two hundred yards farther on, the road turns abruptly down to the right, and descends by a very rough and steep path. Immediately facing us at the turn of the road is a large and massive stone gateway. It is of considerable architectural pretensions, having on each side of the arch a couple of engaged columns with moulded bases and odd-looking capitals, evidently intended as imitations of those of the Ionic order. The top is flat, and finished with bold mouldings. It is to be regretted that most of the gateways in the city and neighbourhood are finished in this way, for the heavy rains cause an accumulation of moss and vegetation on the upper part; and as the mouldings are not of a kind to throw off the water, the stonework becomes stained by the rain streaming over the surface and producing a growth of lichen. This gateway is the entrance to the London Missionary Society's printing establishment. The ground was formerly the property of one of the royal family, and a large house stood upon the spot where the mission-press is now at work. There is a large piece of ground within the inclosure, giving ample room for the residence of the superintendent of the press, for the printing-office, and for a warehouse for bibles and school-books and materials. From this point there are extensive and beautiful prospects in every direction, as the ground descends rapidly all around, except next to the roadway.

Leaving the printing-office, we descend a short distance by a very rough and steep road, and then turn again

abruptly to the northward, passing a small guard-house which marks the boundary of the city proper. The road widens here to a breadth of about thirty feet, and is perhaps the best piece of artificially-formed pathway in the country. It is cut out of the sloping sides of the western division of the city hill, and descends by a pretty regular gradient to Ambàtonakànga, which is about midway between the summit and the plain. It is roughly paved with granite, and was laid out in the reign of Radàma I. Here we see distinctly the great fork of the northern end of the hill on which the capital is built. On our right is the deep valley between them, and beyond it is the ridge of Fàravòhitra, which continues for some distance without much diminution in height. From here we have a good view of the Memorial Church on the summit of the hill, the site of the martyrdom by burning in 1849. Below it, on the level ground, about half a mile distant, is the large square building of the Mission Hospital, coloured white, and very conspicuous from the rest of the houses. Not far from it is the long high-pitched roof of the native chapel at Anàlakèly, a large suburb, where the government workshops are situated. This road is always lively, for it is the chief thoroughfare in the city.

About halfway down, the roadway makes a slight turn, and opens to view, straight before us, the first Memorial Church, at Ambàtonakànga. The site is a very fine one, most convenient of access, in the midst of a large population; and although not situated on the summit of the hill, as are the churches at Ambòhipòtsy and Fàravòhitra, yet it is a considerable height above the surrounding country. The church stands on a large piece of ground, a fine level platform with massive retaining walls of blue rock on the eastern and southern sides; for the ground falls away so

rapidly to the north and west, that at one point the wall is nearly forty feet in height above the roadway. The entrance is by a flight of steps at the angle, and a gateway between stone pillars. The rock comes to the surface in many places, and an immense quantity of the hard basalt had to be removed by blasting to give space for the building. At the farther end of the church were enormous boulders of twenty or thirty feet in height, but these have been almost entirely removed, and their fragments worked into the retaining walls. On each side of the church is a school-house, built of sun-dried brick, plastered; and at the back is a house for the person in charge of the premises, and enough ground for a missionary's residence.

The foundation-stone of the church was laid on the 19th of January, 1864, and the building was opened for worship on the 22nd of January, 1867. The day of opening was made an occasion of great rejoicing by the Christian part of the community, and numbers even of the heathen inhabitants pressed into the building at the dedicatory services. The queen sent a number of officers of rank to represent her on the occasion, and they were accompanied by a band of music. Long before the hour fixed for commencing the service, the church was densely crowded, probably fifteen or sixteen hundred being packed together in the main-building, and its vestries, vestibule, and round the doors; and at least as many more were waiting outside, unable to gain admission. As soon as the forenoon service was concluded, and the congregation had left the church, the building was immediately filled again by those who were unable to gain entrance in the morning; and there they waited patiently from twelve o'clock until three, when the afternoon service began; and as it was not over until five, many were on the ground almost all day.

It is difficult to describe the varied emotions of those who joined in the services of that glad day. Many would remember with astonishment that but five short years ago no one could have met for Christian worship in Antanànarìvo but at the peril of their lives, and that on the spot where they now worshipped God, none daring to make them afraid, many of their friends and relatives had lingered out a painful imprisonment, loaded with fetters, and from that very place many had been dragged away to violent and painful deaths. And we from England, who were taking up the work begun nearly fifty years before, could not but wonder when we remembered that fifteen years of toil had been followed by twenty-six of persecution, and yet that God's truth was not only not stamped out by its enemies, but was springing up into strong and vigorous life, of which those crowded and earnest congregations were but one amongst many proofs. It was impossible not to feel "What hath God wrought!" "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

Ambàtonakànga will always be an interesting spot, from the fact that here the first building for Christian worship in Madagascar was erected, and also that in the old native chapel—a long low dark building, which stood to the east of the present church—many Christians were imprisoned; some dying there from their sufferings, and others being taken from thence to execution by spearing, stoning, burning, and hurling from the rock.

Deferring for the present any further notice of the building and its erection, as well as of the Memorial Church scheme generally, let us proceed along the main road to the north-west, and visit Zomà, the great market-place. We may, however, remark that Ambàtonakànga is at the junction of the two chief roads in the city, and indeed of the

island. From this circumstance it is as frequently called Antsàmpanimahàzo, that is, "at the branching of the roads;" more literally, "at the place where one may obtain or follow branching paths."

The market is situated about a third of a mile from the church, and occupies a large irregularly square piece of ground on a slight elevation. Along one side runs the chief thoroughfare from the city to the west, a row of stalls, roughly thatched, lining the roadside. There are no shops in Antanànarìvo, but there is an abundant supply of all the necessaries of life and the commoner manufactured articles, in some half-dozen small markets held in the open air in various parts of the city. But in addition to these, large markets, more like fairs, at which several thousands of people assemble, are held in different places on various days of the week, both at the capital and at smaller towns within a circle of from fifteen to twenty miles from the city. The market at Antanànarìvo is held on Friday, or Zomà, as it is called in the native language, and this name is applied also to the place where the people assemble. Thus, the Malagasy say they are going to Alàtsinàiny, Talàta, Àlaròbìa, etc.—meaning to the markets held on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, etc. By means of these a large amount of intercommunication is kept up amongst the people. At every market most kinds of food can be purchased, as well as various goods, manufactured and otherwise; but certain articles, as particular kinds of timber, can be obtained only at one place, while other sorts, as well as materials required for building, are best procured at other markets.

This market system is, therefore, a prominent feature in the social life of the Malagasy, and great numbers of people must spend nearly all their time in attending them, either as buyers or sellers. From the crowds which assemble, a

proclamation made at the market is one of the best means of obtaining publicity, so that it is an ancient custom for messages of the sovereign to be delivered and new laws promulgated at these great concourses. These proclamations are generally preceded by the firing of a gun to attract attention. During the persecution of Rànavàlona's reign many of those who were convicted of Christianity were exposed in chains to the view of the people every market-day for months together, in order to intimidate others from joining in their belief. They were thus "made a gazing-stock" and "had trial of cruel mockings," having frequently to endure the insults and contempt of a heathen mob; but in not a few instances their courage and steadfastness induced some of the bystanders to examine the new doctrines for themselves, and finally to embrace the truth of which these faithful confessors were not ashamed.

The capital presents a very lively and animated scene every Friday. From early morning all the roads leading into the city are crowded with people bringing in their goods for sale, or coming to make purchases; and the chief roads in Antanànarìvo, especially the one leading from Andohàlo, past the printing-office and the memorial church, to Zomà, are crowded all day with people. It is a good place for observing the various types of countenance in the different tribes from distant parts, and for becoming acquainted with the products of the country and the articles manufactured by the people. It is true that some of the finer silk lambas and more expensive European goods are not often exposed for sale, but are to be purchased at the houses of the traders and manufacturers, but almost everything else produced in the central parts of the island may be seen.

At my first visit to the market in company with two or

three of the mission brethren, we had some difficulty in getting along, not only from the crowded pathways, but also from the numbers of people pressing round us to see the foreigners. Many of those from a distance had probably never seen a European before, and our presence appeared to afford them great amusement. The main road leading to Zomà was lined for some distance, before reaching the chief market, with the vendors of various goods, who seemed to be arranged in groups, according to the articles they offered for sale. A strong smell of spirits told us, before seeing the numerous bottles, that the Malagasy were acquainted with distilling. The native rum, or *tòaka*, is a coarse fiery spirit made from sugarcane, and is sold at a very low price. Next we pass great heaps of red clay earthenware, pans for cooking rice, *sinys* or water-jars, bottles and dishes, as well as plenty of common English crockery, especially the old familiar willow-pattern. Here are a great variety of straw hats for sale, beautifully made of rice and other straw, and very cheap; and opposite these, the twanging of the native guitar, or *valìha*, shows that the people are not without some musical tastes. A little farther on we can purchase bedsteads and mattresses, etc. The former are made of a kind of mahogany, and are often very massive and handsome, with turned posts, and well finished and put together. Mattresses are often filled with the down of the flower of certain plants, which makes a very soft and comfortable bed.

Entering into the principal part of the market, we have hard work to push our way among the people. On the nearer side, a forest of upright pieces of wood for the rafters and framework of houses, points out the position of the timber market; and here the buyers for our churches, as well as the Roman Catholic artisans, may generally be

seen selecting the best wood for their carpentry work. The boards for flooring and lining houses are generally sold in bundles of half-a-dozen or so; but it is necessary to examine before purchasing, for the inner ones are often so thin in the middle as to leave but a shaving after they are planed. Not far from these are large bundles of *hèrana*, a triangular rush universally used for roofing; there are also quantities of a larger rush called *zozòro*, which is fastened together to form partitions, in the poorer class of houses. The hèrana is tied upon slender pieces of bamboo, from fifteen to twenty feet long. Both these kinds of rush are species of papyrus.

Leaving the wood market, we come to the provision stalls, which are merely small squares of the clay soil raised a little above the level of the ground. The cackle of innumerable fowls, and the gobbling of hundreds of ducks and geese, show us that poultry is plentiful in this part of the country; and on inquiry we find that a fowl can be purchased from fourpence up to eightpence, and geese and turkeys from a shilling to eighteenpence apiece. Beef is equally cheap in proportion, and so are vegetables; there is an abundant supply of sweet potatoes, manioc, beans, maize, etc. Of rice there are several varieties, and of excellent quality, for it is the staple food of the people. Various kinds of fruit are to be obtained almost all the year round; and peaches, bananas, mangoes, pineapples, oranges, lemons, citrons, pumpkins, melons, grapes, Cape gooseberries, bibasy, mulberries, guavas, pomegranates, with some others exclusively native, make up a list of vegetable produce which might be largely increased by the introduction of European fruits, which will most of them flourish here. The heaps of small brown locusts did not look very tempting, nor are the chrysalides of the silkworm

moth what we should consider a special dainty. A kind of earth-nut is esteemed by the Malagasy, but has an unpleasant mouldy taste to us; while several native fruits of which they are fond, are harsh and distasteful to our palates. Heaps of brilliant scarlet chillies and capsicums, roots of ginger, and leaves of tobacco dried for the manufacture of

MELON, POMEGRANATE, AND CITRON.

snuff, almost complete the vegetable products to be obtained in the market.

Turning to the western side of the square, we find a variety of articles of native manufacture—nails, locks, hinges, bolts, hoes, knives, swords, and other ironwork, as well as bars of iron for working up into any required shape. Cloths of various materials, all hand-woven and spun, of ròfia and banana fibre, hemp, cotton, and silk, can be purchased, as well as raw cotton, and silk in the cocoon.

Most of the cloth is made up in the form of lambas, the ordinary outer dress of the Malagasy; and even the commonest materials are often designed with stripes and patterns showing considerable taste. The more expensive kinds of cotton and silk lambas are beautifully woven, and the colours are arranged so as to harmonise well together.

But it would be tedious to enumerate everything that can be bought at these great markets; we must not, however, forget to glance at the slave market, held in one corner of the square, where numbers of slaves (men and women) are frequently exposed for sale.

The main road leading through the market continues to the north-west, passing through the midst of a populous suburb, past the large tomb of the prime minister's family, and then descending to the plain, which it crosses to the westward. From this neighbourhood there is a fine view of the city in its entire length from north to south, all the chief buildings being visible from this point.

From the market it is but a short distance, descending to the level ground between the two northern divisions of the city hill, to the Mission Hospital and the government workshops at Anàlakèly. The workshops are arranged in a large square enclosure, and were erected by the English artisans who formed part of the first mission. Many of the useful arts were taught by them to the people, and a great number of native youths put under their instruction as apprentices. Carpentry and joinery, blacksmith's work, tanning, soap-making, and other works of utility, were introduced amongst the people, and an impetus given to civilisation which has never entirely ceased, notwithstanding the retrograde movements of the many years of Rànavàlona's reign. Machinery has recently been fitted up here for the preliminary processes in the manufacture of gun-

powder, but the materials are mixed at a place just outside the city.

Almost adjoining the workshops is the Mission Hospital, one of the largest buildings in the city. It is two storeys in height, and about 100 feet long by 30 feet broad, and is constructed almost entirely of sun-dried bricks, plastered externally with lime. Although such a building material in England would give the idea of something very insecure, yet the clay here is of so hard and tenacious a character that buildings of this kind are really very substantial, and, if occasionally pointed, will last for a great number of years. The mortar also is nothing but clay well-tempered, and the interior plastering is of the same material mixed with a little sharp sand. The hospital stands just under the brow of the hill, perhaps a little too close to it. It has a large piece of ground in front, and behind are the kitchens and offices. The building will accommodate fifty patients, and consists of two long wards or rooms the whole length of the structure, one on the ground-floor and the other above. Each bed is screened off by light moveable wooden framework covered with chintz cloth, so that there is free circulation of air throughout. The windows are all sashed, and the ground-floor tiled. At the back is a projection containing the staircase, with a dispensary below, and operating and consulting room above. Great numbers of people may be seen waiting here every day for advice and medicine, for this department of Christian work is highly appreciated by all classes of the people. Dr. Andrew Davidson, the indefatigable medical missionary, has his residence adjoining the hospital, so that the patients have the benefit of his constant attendance in severe cases.

Besides the direct benefit afforded to the people by Dr. Davidson's labours, he has several intelligent young men

under his charge, whom he instructs in medicine and surgery. These young Malagasy have in many instances shown, by their attention and acquirements, that the teaching they receive, and the experience gained by seeing patients, are not lost upon them; and it may be hoped that many of them will in due time be well qualified to act as physicians to their countrymen, and to take charge of dispensaries and medical mission stations in distant parts of the country.*

The hospital was commenced in January, 1864, and opened in July of the following year. An average number of 5000 patients have been treated and prescribed for every year since its opening. The queen and nobles, and the people generally, took great interest in its erection, and aided by contributions of materials and labour; and presents of food are constantly being sent for the support of patients who are too poor to maintain themselves while in the hospital.

A few words upon the sanitary condition and the water-supply of the capital may appropriately conclude this description of Antanànarìvo. From the total absence of drainage, except that which the steep and rocky site of the city affords naturally, and the very primitive sanitary arrangements in other respects, it might be supposed that the place would be unhealthy; but the contrary is the fact. There is no registration of births and deaths, so that it is not possible to show this by figures; but from observations of the average mortality, as far as it comes under our notice, there is reason to believe that Antanànarìvo is a very healthy town. It owes this, no doubt, in a great measure to its situation, to the purity of the air and its free

* One of Dr. Davidson's students has lately (October, 1869) gone to the Bétsilèo country to open a mission hospital at Tianàrantsòa.

circulation, arising from the great height of the city above the plain, and from the quickness with which water runs off the surface of the gravelly soil. To these may be added the dryness of the atmosphere during a great part of the year, so that decomposing substances do not produce those evil effects which would follow under similar circumstances at a lower elevation above the sea-level. Another circumstance must also have great influence in conducing to a low rate of mortality—namely, the cheapness and abundance of food, and the general absence of that abject distress to which our working-classes in England are so often reduced during depression of trade.

Antanànarìvo is supplied with water from numerous springs which gush out of the base of the hill. It is generally good in quality, although there are considerable differences, one or two springs being much superior. On account of the labour of carrying water up into the city from below, it is not used so plentifully as is desirable by the people, either for their persons or their houses. It is generally fetched in globular-shaped clay waterpots, or *sinys*, which hold four or five gallons, and are carried upon the head. As in most Eastern countries, this is the women's work, and every evening numbers of the female slaves are collected together round the springs, chatting and gossipping, and then ascending the steep paths into the city in long lines, with the waterpots cleverly balanced upon the head.

Some years ago an attempt was made, by a French resident, to supply the palace with water by gravitation, from a hill to the north-east of the city. This place is called Ambòhibé, and is about four or five miles distant; and being more than a hundred feet higher than any part of Antanànarìvo, water would of course flow through pipes to any part of the capital. A reservoir was constructed in

a hollow of the hills, and a line of earthen pipes laid down; but they soon got out of order, and were so easily damaged that the greater part have since been removed. Their course may be traced in several places, and it seems a pity that a more durable aqueduct should not be laid, and a plentiful supply of good water distributed in every part of the city, as it is evident might be done.*

* Since the foregoing was written some slight changes have been made in the buildings of the city, particularly in the rebuilding, in an improved style, of some of the larger native churches. I have not thought it necessary to alter the passages where they are referred to. I have described Antanànarìvo as it would appear to a stranger in the summer of 1867, when I left the capital.

CHAPTER VI.

NEIGHBOURHOOD OF THE CAPITAL; AND THE SACRED CITIES OF IMÉRINA.

The twelve sacred mountains—Symbolical use of the number twelve—Seats of ancient capitals—Their names—Alasòra, seat of ancestors of reigning family—Roads in the capital—Tombs lining the north road—Rice-plain—Rice cultivation—Kètsa grounds — Harvest scenes — Granaries and rice-holes — Terrible mode of punishment — Manjàkarày and its village church—Fortified character of Hova towns — Hill of granite — Geology of Imérina — Ilàfy — Radàma's tomb — Market at Àsabòtsy—Màngahàzo or manioc—Prickly-pear and other vegetation—Native villages—Cattle-feeding—Ambòhimànga—Entrance forbidden to Europeans—Ampàrafàravàto and the idol Rakèlimalàza—Ambòhitrabìby—The idol Ramàhavàly and his village—Cradle of idolatry and legendary beliefs of the Hovas—Ambòhidratrìmo—Curiously-arranged house—River embankments—Breaches during heavy rains—Waterfall at Ifàrahàntsana—Stone bridges—Palace at Isòanieràna.

IN proclamations and messages from the sovereign of Madagascar to the people, some allusion is generally made to the idols of the country and to the twelve holy mountains. These are appealed to and sworn by as part of the traditionary glory of the kingdom, and, together with the ancestors of the royal family, are mentioned on public occasions of special solemnity—such as when taking the oath of allegiance, calling out levies of troops, and at the national festival of the new year. The sacred mountains are hills within a few miles of Antanànarìvo, upon which ancient towns are built, most of them having formerly been capitals of petty states, and all being regarded by the Malagasy with a mixed feeling of loyal and religious respect. It is difficult to ascertain precisely the name of every one of

these sacred places; eight or nine will always be mentioned by any intelligent native, but as to the last two or three various answers will be given. It appears probable that the number twelve, as amongst the Jews and other Eastern nations, has the idea of perfection and completeness attached to it, a definite number being used for an indefinite and uncertain one. Thus, the king is said to have twelve wives, two or three being the limit allowed to a subject, and the royal ancestors are always spoken of as "the twelve sovereigns."

Most of these sacred places are visible from the upper parts of Antanànarìvo, for in former times every town of any importance was built upon an elevation in order to give security against an attacking force. From this circumstance there is a curious connection between the Malagasy words for town and mountain, the former being *vòhitra*, the latter *tèndrombòhitra = tèndrony vòhitra*—that is, "the top of the town." The mountain, therefore, receives its designation from the town so frequently found crowning its summit, and is merely "the top of the town." There seems to be a point of similarity here between the Malagasy, and the use of the Hebrew words for hill—*gib*, *gibel*, for Gibeah and Gibeon; except that the converse is used, the town being called after the hill.

A glance at the map will show the position of these venerated places. Taking our stand upon the balcony of the Great Palace at the capital, we can distinguish the most distant of these sacred spots, except of course where hidden by intervening hills. In the sharp clear air of this elevated plateau not less than a hundred small towns and villages can be counted from our elevation of five or six hundred feet. Many of these are built upon hills, and most of the ancient towns are overshadowed by a grove of old trees—a

species of Indian fig, similar to those remaining in the central parts of Antanànarìvo; they are allied to the well-known banian, and are very similar in appearance to our English elms, both in their branching and leafage. These trees are conspicuous from the fact that there is but little foliage of any other kind within several miles of the capital. There are a number of gardens in the neighbourhood, belonging to the queen and the chief officers and nobles, but they have mostly been planted too recently for them to have attained any size, so that these old *àviàvy* crowning the hills are striking objects.

Beginning the list with Antanànarìvo, and looking northwards, we enumerate Ilàfy, Ambòhitrabìby, Ambòhi mànga, Namèhana, and Ambòhidratrìmo; westward, Ambòhidrapèto; southward, Alasòra; and eastward, Ambòhimànambòla and Ambòhimanjàka. The syllables "Ambòhi," forming the first part of so many of these names, and indeed of the great majority of all Malagasy towns, is a contraction of *any vòhitra, i.e.* "at the town," which is further described and defined by the rest of the word; as Ambòhimanambola, "the town having money;" Ambòhimanjàka, "the kings' (or the kingly) town," and so with the others. The "I" prefixed to some, as Ilàfy, and to the names of rivers (as Ikiòpa, Iharòka, etc.) is an article, used also for personal names, especially for slaves—as Ibòto, Ikòto, etc.

Of these places, Àlasòra and some neighbouring villages to the southward are said to have been the original seat of the ancestors of the present reigning family. About two hundred years ago, one of them, Àndrianjáka, proceeded northwards, and appears to have made himself master of Antanànarìvo, which he made his capital. A descendant of this prince, named Àndriamàsinavàlona, reduced the

greater part of Imérina under his authority, and at his death divided his dominions between his four sons and a nephew. The eldest son received the district of Avàradràno to the north as his share, and reigned at Ambòhimànga; but his grandson, Iambòasalàma, by conquest, and by marriage with the daughters of other chieftains, contrived to reunite the whole of Imérina under one authority, and in addition made himself master of several neighbouring provinces. Iambòasalàma afterwards took the name of Àndrian-impòin-Imérina (literally, " the prince in the heart of Imérina "), and at his death, in 1810, was able, through his aggressive policy, to leave to his son, Radàma I., not merely the sovereignty of a single town with a few square miles of territory, but of a powerful kingdom, comprising the greater part of the central provinces of the island. Deferring for the present any further notice of Radàma I., and the great changes which were effected in his reign in the politics and civilisation of Madagascar, we will descend from our lofty post of observation, and mounting a palanquin take a ride to one or two of these ancient towns, noticing in our way any features of interest in the vicinity of the capital.

We leave the city by the northern road, and descending the hill by the mission printing premises at Imarìvolànitra, pass down the broad and comparatively well-paved street leading to the great market. This road is cut out of the side of the hill, and was constructed under the superintendence of M. Le Gros, a French artisan, who carried out several public works for Radàma I. About halfway down we pass over a mass of hard blue basalt, called Ambàtovinàky, that is, " the broken rock," so named from a great quantity of the rock having been removed by blasting to open a pathway. The place is invested with a

kind of sanctity, as certain things which are supposed to be offensive to the chief idol are not allowed to be brought beyond this point. On a small open space, just above the road on the left hand as we descend, the judges frequently sit to hear causes and dispense justice in the open air, and the roadway itself is often filled with people interested in the cases which are being tried. Taking the northern of the four crossways which meet at the gateway of the Ambàtonakànga Memorial Church, we leave it on the left, passing along the foot of the lofty retaining-wall by a road which descends rapidly towards the valley, dividing the two northern branches of the city hill. The road here is really abominable, especially during the rainy season. It is crooked and narrow, and, except where harder material comes to the surface, is intersected by a deep trench cut out by the heavy rain. The soil is red clay with veins of a soft sandy material, and it is no easy matter to walk here, and in many other parts of the city, when the rain is falling; for the path is constantly interrupted by small cataracts, and where there is no water the soft slippery clay makes it difficult to get a firm footing.

The only attention the roads of the city receive is at the end of the rainy season, about April or May. It is the *fànompòana*, or government service of the *bòrizàny*, or civilians, to attend to the repairs. They assemble in large numbers on an appointed day, and the holes are filled up, not with stone or any hard material, but by cutting away the higher ground at the sides. The next heavy rain of course soon sweeps away the loosely-filled-up soil, and finds its former channel. The roads which are unpaved are therefore constantly being lowered, so that some of them present the appearance more of the dry bed of a torrent than a roadway in our sense of the word.

Passing the hospital and government workshops to the left, at the lowest part of the descent, we rise again in order to cross the northern end of the eastern division of the city. The point where the road passes over the ridge is about 150 feet above the plain. Here there are a number of large square tombs, for this part of the city has been quite the Necropolis of Antanànarìvo; and from this spot to the highest part of Fàravòhitra, these ancient graves line the pathway, and are scattered all over the hillside. Descending again to the plain, the roadway, which is tolerably level and straight, passes between high walls of red clay, which inclose the grounds attached to country-houses. These walls are built in irregular courses, the tops being stuck full of small sharp pieces of bone, partly for ornament, and partly to prevent any climbing over them, as we put broken glass upon walls in England to stop trespassing.

In one of the courtyards on the right hand, just before getting clear of the town, is a rather remarkable tomb. It is a square structure of dressed stone, with a lofty ornamental headstone, having a shield and spear carved upon its face. The angles are finished with conical ornaments, and it is altogether a superior piece of work. This road to the north is tolerably wide and smooth, and is kept in better order than any other on account of its being traversed every year by the queen in going to and returning from Ambòhimànga at the new year's festival. At several places where small streams cross the road, they are bridged over by slabs of basalt, and in two or three cases by small stone arches. Here and there the great rice-plain to the west is continued to the eastward of the path by broad valleys, over which the roadway is carried on a low embankment.

Rice is the staff of life to the Malagasy, and its culture occupies a great portion of the time and attention of every

part of the community. To have a meal is termed *mihìnam-bàry*, that is, "to eat rice"—equivalent to "eating bread" in Scripture and Eastern phraseology. Rice is the staple of every meal, and everything else is regarded as merely an accessory. The fields in which rice is cultivated vary much in size, but they are all perfectly level; and, indeed, for many miles to the west and north of Antanànarìvo there cannot be more than a few inches' difference in the surface of the whole plain. This is necessary in order that the water may flow evenly over every part of the growing crop, for water is, from first to last, essential to its cultivation. To our ideas, rice-culture appears to involve a great deal of unnecessary trouble, for every stalk has not only to be sown but transplanted as well. These level plains are not the only scene of labour in connection with the growing of rice; the work commences in what are called the *kètsa* grounds. These are generally formed in valleys in the hollows of the hillsides, sloping down to the plains, and they are a rather pretty feature in the landscape, from the pleasant contrast their vivid green presents to the dry herbage and red clay of the hills. A series of terraces is formed, each having a low bank of earth, a foot or so high, to prevent the soil and plants from being washed down to a lower level. In these hollows a spring is generally found, and its water is conducted over the uppermost terraces, from which it finds its way down each successive step until it reaches the plain. Many kètsa grounds thus present the appearance of an immense green and watery staircase ascending the hollow in the hillside. On these terraces the rice is sown thickly upon the ground after it has been dug and softened by the water spread over its surface. In some places the kètsa grounds are formed at the sides of the bed of streams or canals, which

are much diminished in size during the long dry season; and in such places the sower may be seen literally casting the seed "upon the waters," reminding one forcibly of the verse in the Book of Ecclesiastes.* After a few weeks the blade comes up thickly, and when it is about six inches in height the business of transplanting begins. All are engaged in this work—the slaves, male and female, in preparing the ground and bringing the plants, and the owner and his wife and family in superintending the operations. The young plants are taken up and tied in small bundles, and brought to the rice-fields in the plain. There also the water is standing a few inches deep, being brought by an extensive system of canals and watercourses from the river Ikiòpa. A number of plants being held in one hand, they are rapidly and dexterously fixed in the soft soil, plenty of room being left for each to grow freely without crowding; and this part of the work is performed with astonishing quickness by those who are accustomed to it. A rapid change in the appearance of the country soon takes place during rice-planting. Extensive tracts of dry and brown land are speedily covered with an exquisite green carpet, rivalling in freshness of colour the lawns in an English garden.

Harvest-time presents a scene not less pleasing than the planting. The great plain is covered with waving crops of yellow grain, much resembling a barley-field when ripe, but still growing in water a foot or more deep. From this constant necessity for moisture during the whole cultivation of rice, the Malagasy use it as a comparison for things which are inseparable. They say such-and-such things are "like rice and water;" for rice is sown upon the water, it springs up in water, it is transplanted in water, it is

* Eccles. xi. 1.

reaped in water, it is brought by water to be threshed, and finally it is cooked in water, and a preparation of rice-water is a favourite drink after a meal—so that there is considerable force in the comparison. In riding to some villages near the capital, the only road is by the low embankments which divide one portion of the plain from another; and during harvest it is a most lively and animated scene. Men are up to their knees in water cutting the rice with large straight-bladed knives; the sheaves are piled up in small canoes and brought to the banks, where the women are busily engaged in laying them out to dry in the sun, and then threshing the rice upon large pieces of stone, or a hard smooth surface of prepared clay. No flail is used, but the separation of the grain from the husk is effected by the very simple and primitive method of taking up a handful of stalks, and beating the heads upon the stone or hard ground. The rice is then further dried in the sun, and afterwards stored away for use. The spade used by the Malagasy differs from that employed in Europe in having a handle six or seven feet long, made of hard wood, the blade being much longer but only half the width of our common English spade. As shoes are only used by the upper and wealthy classes of the people, the foot is of course not employed in working the ground; the spade is driven in by the mere weight of the handle. Every field is dug over in this way, no plough being used to prepare the land for sowing or planting. Water is previously let over the rice-grounds to soften the soil, which has been hardened by several months' dry weather. During rice-harvest whole families, who generally reside in the city, go out to their country-houses in the neighbourhood of their rice-fields, and all take part in the gathering-in and storing-away of the crop.

The granaries where rice is kept consist merely of circular dome-shaped pits dug in the hard clay soil. The mouth of each of these store-pits is covered with a small flat stone, and then with earth, so as to be perfectly impervious to the air, and the rice thus stored may be kept without damage for a considerable length of time. On the level plain, where a hole would become damp, an odd-looking conical structure of clay is made instead. These places are from ten to fifteen feet high, and finished at the top with a circular opening, covered with a stone, for depositing or withdrawing the grain. A boy is let down into the store-hole to hand up the baskets of rice as required, or to replenish it when the crops are gathered in. During the times of persecution rice-holes were frequently used as places of refuge by Christians who were sought for by the soldiers of the queen; and meetings for prayer and instruction were often held in these darksome retreats. Rice-pits were made available for a very cruel mode of punishment which was sometimes adopted by former sovereigns. The criminal was placed within the hole, leaving his head only above the surface of the ground; boiling water was then poured in until the unhappy sufferer was scalded to death. In erecting new buildings upon ground which has been used for a long time as a site for dwelling-houses, rice-holes are frequently a source of great annoyance and expense. Being generally covered over with earth, it is impossible for any-one not well acquainted with the ground for many years past to guess where they may be placed, and houses are frequently obliged to be rebuilt on account of settlements caused by these concealed pits near the foundations.

After the rice has been cut the plain presents the appearance of an extensive lake, broken only by the elevated grounds upon which the villages are built, rising like

islands from the water. In order to reach, by the shortest cut, a neighbouring village, the people not unfrequently need to cross a mile or two of what might apparently be a deep lake. Women and children, with their long dresses girded round their waist, may be seen setting off from the bank and crossing the water, which nowhere exceeds a couple of feet in depth.

Evaporation soon dries up the fields, which then become pasture-ground for sheep and cattle until the next planting-time comes round. The soil is generally a bluish-black clay or silt, evidently the product of a long continuance of decomposing vegetable matter. Each field is divided from the rest by a low bank of earth and sods, and sometimes these narrow ridges are the only pathway to certain places when the water is still standing in the fields. In such cases there is only foothold for one of the bearers at each end of the palanquin, each of whom is obliged to hold both poles, and it is by no means pleasant in boggy or marshy ground to feel the tremulous and sometimes painful efforts of the two men to carry one along the narrow pathway. In other places a crooked branch of a tree is the only bridge over streams too deep to be conveniently forded.

But to continue our journey northwards. We notice about half a mile to the west a village called Manjàkarày. Conspicuous above its houses is the gable and cross of the large native chapel, built of sun-dried bricks. The village was struck by a waterspout a day or two before Christmas, 1867. Nearly fifty houses were unroofed and more or less damaged, and the neat chapel, upon which the congregation had spent much labour and money, was stripped of its roof and the walls partly blown down. It was reported that people were even taken off their feet and carried a considerable

distance by the whirlwind which accompanied the water-spout. Not disheartened however by the calamity, the people soon responded to their missionary's appeal to re-build; and in a very short time they reconstructed their house of prayer in a more substantial manner, and with a heavy and more durable roofing of tiles, instead of the thatch previously used.

About three miles from the capital, we pass two or three large villages close to the road. These places are surrounded by fosses, from fifteen to twenty feet deep. The clay sides are generally as steep and unbroken as if cut out of rock, for the soil is so tenacious that it stands the heavy rains of the wet season with very little abrasion. These fosses are crossed only at one or two points to give access to rude gateways in the clay ramparts surrounding the village. These gates, like those on the eastern approach to Antanànarìvo, are sometimes formed by fixing long square blocks of stone into the ground at the angles, and filling the space between with clay or masonry of thin slabs of basalt; a large circular stone, which used to be drawn across the opening in time of war, is occasionally met with.

In the case of some of the more important places, as at the sacred cities, there are sometimes two or three distinct lines of deep fosses, making a very elaborate system of fortification; so that, before the introduction of firearms, many of the towns situated upon hills and surrounded by these deep moats must have been wellnigh impregnable. These defences impress one with a vivid idea of the unsettled state of society before Imérina became consolidated into one state. Every petty town with its chief must have been constantly exposed to danger from its neighbours to have needed such elaborate defences. An enormous amount of labour must have been required to excavate these deep

trenches; and however much oppression and wrong may have been done in the reduction of the whole province under one sovereign, it is evident that it is an unspeakable gain to society to have a government under which these fortifications are no longer required. Where the towns are built on a rising ground, a trench is generally cut leading to a lower level, so as to carry off the water accumulating in the moats during the rainy season. The fosses are admirable places for fern-hunting, and a great variety may be collected in their moist and shady depths, including the gold and silver species, and many others which are only found in hothouses in England.

Some three or four miles from the city we pass, on the right hand, a low oval hill of perhaps five or six hundred feet in length. Large slabs of basalt may be seen on different parts of its slopes; these are detached from the rock by means of fire, and then moved with rollers and levers to the plain, and thence taken where required to be used in the construction of tombs in the neighbourhood. If we ascend the hillside we shall see that it is entirely composed of granite and basalt, with a thin covering ot grass here and there. There is a great variety of beautiful material, of all shades of red, buff and purple, mottled and veined, approaching in many places the colour and texture of our Devon and Derbyshire marbles. In England or Scotland such a hill would be a valuable property, and would soon be the scene of extensive granite and marble works. Several hills in the neighbourhood are covered thickly with masses of quartz, giving them a peculiar greyish-yellow appearance at a distance.

The greater part of Imérina, and indeed most of the central districts of the island, as far as I have had an opportunity of observing the country, seem to be composed

chiefly ot primary rocks, with traces of volcanic action in some parts. A foundation of granite seems to underlie every part of the country, and this is continually coming to the surface, forming detached hills, which rise abruptly from the plains. It frequently forms lofty and sharp peaks, which are the highest points of the whole country. Upon the granite lies a compact and dense clay, generally of a bright red colour, but sometimes yellow or buff, with veins of a hard quartzose sandy material, having very much the appearance of granite, but without any cementing element to bind the whole together. These strata seem entirely destitute of fossils, nor could I ever detect any trace of animal or vegetable organisms, either in stone or earth. The valleys are filled with a dark-coloured alluvial soil, strongly contrasting with the bright tints of the elevated ground. No secondary or tertiary rocks, either sandstones or limestones, are found near the capital, but towards the south-west, in the direction of the Ankàratra mountains, a stratum of calcareous rock occurs. At Madèra, about five-and-twenty miles' distance, a kind of gypsum is found, and at Antsìrabé, directly south of the capital, limestone is quarried at the surface of the ground; from these two places the greater part of the lime used for masonry at Antanànarìvo is procured. Going farther in the same direction, and ascending the hills, extensive ranges of caves are found honeycombing the sides of cliffs between the highest points of Ankàratra.*

In the month of November, 1868, the Rev. Mr. Campbell, of the Church Missionary Society, travelled through a district of the interior which appears to have been hitherto unknown to Europeans. This was not far from the Ankàratra range of mountains, and is described by him as presenting

* See Appendix B.: "Notes on the Natural History of the Island."

very striking indications of volcanic action. He says: "It seemed as if the whole place were once a great smeltery, from the enormous number of clinkers lying about. There were altogether five mountains, all near to each other, which have been active volcanoes at some remote period; each has a crater, or rather, one of its sides melted down, and the inside hollowed out. The flow of lava looks as if it had been some immense reservoir bursting its banks, and the water dashing and foaming through, bearing everything away with it or covering the plain beneath. Its course is as plainly marked as is that of a river which is flowing at some distance."* There are hot springs in the neighbourhood of these extinct volcanoes.

At Itàsy, fifty miles to the west of the capital, volcanic agency is equally apparent; mountains like truncated cones and the presence of pumice and lava all testify to former internal disturbance.

About a mile from the road to the north, on the right-hand side, is Ilàfy, one of the ancient royal and sacred towns. It has a picturesque appearance, being situated on a long oval hill rising about two hundred feet above the plain. It is thickly wooded with the usual *àviàvy* trees, amongst which we see the lofty roofs and pointed horns of some of the large houses. At the northern end of the village, outside the *hàdy*, or fosse, is the native chapel, beautifully situated at the top of a long green slope, with a background of trees. It is one of the largest of the country places of worship, is built of clay, and neatly plastered and coloured inside and out. A verandah runs along its western side, forming a protection from the rain in the wet season.

Passing through the old gateway, we ascend into the

* "Church Missionary Intelligencer."

town proper, the space within the fosses. As at the capital and the other royal and sacred towns and villages, no houses of clay, brick, or stone are erected within the moat all are of wood or bamboo. It is difficult to ascertain precisely the reason of this restriction as to the material of the dwellings within these ancient towns. It appears partly religious, partly political, in its origin; for many of the villages in Imérina where idols are kept are subject to the same regulation; while it appears probable that timber houses, which cost more labour and money, and demand greater skill for their erection, were formerly considered more worthy of the capital of a chief or petty prince than the commoner and cheaper structures of clay and earth. Stone houses are of very modern introduction in Madagascar: the two or three small erections of this material which have been built belong exclusively to the sovereign, so that it is probable they would not have been forbidden had the art of stonemasonry been of more ancient origin.

The interior of the village is rather pretty, with its overshadowing trees, and the extensive prospects seen in every direction through the openings. In the centre of the place is another inclosure of upright stakes or palisades. This is called the *ròva*, a name applied to the courtyards of the royal residences, both at Antanànarìvo and the other ancient towns. Within this fence are several lofty houses, built in the old Malagasy fashion, oblong in plan, nearly of the same height as length, as regards the walls, which are formed of thick upright planks of timber, with enormously high and steep roofs, thatched with the usual hèrana, or rush, and with long horns crossing each other at the gables. The interiors of some are dark and gloomy, having no light but from the small narrow

windows; in some cases the roofs are open to the ridge, the thatch inside being black with the soot of many years' fires. The roofs are supported by three lofty posts, one at each end and the other in the centre of the house.

Within the ròva are not only the old residences belonging to the royal family, but also their graves. These have at first sight the appearance of small wooden houses, except that they have no windows. They are erected over square mounds built up with stonework, and are roofed with wooden shingles; the barge-boards being carved with a simple semicircular ornament, and the horns at the gables notched at the ends. When visiting the village a few days after my arrival at the capital, we noticed a new and neatly-finished house of this kind, and it was with sad and painful feelings that we learned that it was erected over the remains of Radàma II. What bright anticipations of a reign that at first promised so much good to his country and honour to himself were here brought to an untimely end! The corpse of the deceased king was carried out of Antanànarìvo in the darkness and obscurity of the night following the day of his death, and brought here to rest near the remains of some of his mother's ancestors.

At a little distance from Ilàfy we ford a small river called the Màmba (crocodile), and presently reach an open bare space of ground called Asabòtsy, the Malagasy name for Saturday. If it happens to be that day of the week, many hundreds of people from the surrounding country are assembled here, attending the market held upon the spot. A party of Europeans passing through, causes a great sensation, and is soon surrounded by a dense crowd anxious to have a look at the foreigners. We were forcibly reminded of Christian and Faithful at Vanity Fair, though, in justice to the Malagasy, it must be said that they treated

us with great civility, notwithstanding their curiosity. About a mile or so farther on we pass a prettily-wooded village called Inòsy, with some large houses belonging to officers of rank in the city. Many of the chief nobles and people of wealth in the capital have residences in the neighbourhood, within five or six miles, with large plots of ground and extensive gardens surrounding the houses. These residences are substantially built of clay or sun-dried brick—some being of large size, and handsomely finished and painted in the interior. The gardens are planted with mango, peach, banana, loquat or bibasy, and other fruit trees, and often having a sheet of water with gold and silver fish in the lower part of the grounds. In some cases the walks are laid out in European fashion, with clipped edges and borders of a quick-growing shrub resembling our privet. They are pleasant places in which to spend an hour or two after a ride from the capital.

The greater part of the country to the east of this north road consists of long rounded moorlike hills, covered with coarse grass, which becomes dry and brown during the cold season. Near the villages on these rolling downs a good deal of ground is planted with *màngahàzo* or manioc-root, *vòamànga* or sweet potatoes, beans of different kinds, pine-apples, Indian-corn, with here and there patches of sugar-cane.

The manioc, or *màngahàzo* (*i. e.* "blue wood," so called from the colour of the stem), is extensively used by the Malagasy, and, next to rice, forms the staple food of the lower classes. It is planted by simply sticking a piece of its stem or branch into the ground at regular intervals. After twelve or fifteen months' time the plant has grown to the height of a small shrub, and the roots, from six to eight inches long and about an inch and a half in thick-

ness, are ready for use. Being composed of a white farinaceous substance, manioc is exceedingly nutritious, and a kind of tapioca is frequently prepared from it. It is boiled and sold in large quantities in the markets, and is also eaten in an uncooked state; many of the poorer classes eat nothing else at their midday meal. The leaves of the plant are also boiled, and used as a kind of vegetable with rice and meat.

The divisions between these patches of cultivated ground are formed by low walls of earth, which are often planted with a prickly shrub called *sòngosòngo.* It is a species of euphorbia (*E. splendens*), and bears a quantity of brilliant scarlet flowers, and often lines the road for considerable distances. Another species or variety bears a pale-yellow flower, and is equally abundant and quick-growing.

In places where a more secure fence is required, the prickly-pear is planted, and grows rapidly into a dense and impervious hedge, presenting an effectual barrier both to man and animals. The thick fleshy leaves are covered with long spines, sharp as a needle, and often causing severe wounds, which are slow in healing. The fruit is eatable, although not much of a dainty, and is covered with minute prickles, which are very difficult to remove from the fingers if incautiously handled. In a few years the prickly-pear grows to the height of twelve or fourteen feet, with thick knotted stems; it is sometimes called *tsy-àfaka-àmby*, that is, "impassable by cattle," a most appropriate name. The flower, which is yellow and red in colour, grows at the edges of the succulent leaves of the tree.

Two or three species of aloe grow plentifully in Imérina, and also the castor-oil plant, which bears a quantity of green berries about the size of a nutmeg, but covered with bluntish points or papillæ. In many places a grace-

ful palmlike tree, but not exceeding fifteen or sixteen feet high, grows in small clumps. It is called *hàsina*, and is said to be sacred to the idols. It bears a cluster of long grasslike leaves at the top of its slender trunk, and is probably a species of pandanus. In some of the more sheltered hollows there are a few ròfia palms, but they are too few in number to give any character to the scenery.

On these open breezy downs there are numbers of inclosures, formed of high clay walls, surrounding the grounds of the country-houses. Most of these are square, but many are perfectly circular, which gives to some parts of the country a peculiar character, something like a number of detached forts or military outworks. In some cases the gateways have rude attempts at ornamentation, pilasters and architraves being worked in the clay; and sometimes patterns are formed by inserting small pieces of quartz in the clay when building and still soft. The date of erection, name of the property, owner's initials, and other devices, are thus produced.

Malagasy villages on level ground are generally monotonous and uninteresting enough. There is little to distinguish one house from another, and there is seldom much vegetation growing within the inclosure of the fosse, to give the charm of verdure to the appearance of the place. In some villages the *hàdy* is filled with lemon and peach trees, but these do not show much above the surface of the ground. In most villages there are several shallow square pits scattered here and there amongst the houses. These are called *fàhitra*, and are used to keep cattle in during the time they are being fattened. The people have a notion that the animals thrive best if they stand during feeding with the forelegs at a higher level, so as to throw the weight of the body upon the hind-quarters. Whether

this is a mere fancy, or has any foundation in fact, it is undeniable that many animals attain a great size; but probably their plentiful supplies of Indian-corn, sugarcane, and other food, has more to do with their excellent condition than their posture when feeding. The walls of many houses are covered with circular cakes of cowdung drying in the sun. This fuel is chiefly used for heating the flat surfaces of rock from which the slabs used in making tombs are procured.

About ten or twelve miles to the northward of the capital the level plain is terminated by a range of hills, which shut out the view of the country beyond in that direction. For a great distance to the north-west there stretches a fertile vale, through which the Ikiòpa winds for many miles, until it is lost in the far distance. Upon a detached hill in the foreground of this range stands the old capital, Ambòhimànga—a place regarded with peculiar veneration by the Malagasy. The long oval hill on which the town is built runs east and west, and has been visible over the intervening level ground all through our journey from Antanànarìvo, the indistinct blue of its outline becoming more defined as we proceed, and resolving into the lighter green of its covering woods as we approach nearer, mile after mile. About a mile and a half distant, ascending a rising ground, we gain a fine view of the city, or rather of the bold rocky hill on one side of which it is situate; for the greater part of the houses are built on the northern slopes, and consequently are invisible from this side. Though less in extent and height than the capital, in boldness it does not fall far short of Antanànarìvo itself, and in some other respects is superior to it in appearance.

From base to summit, a height of nearly three hundred feet, it is covered with trees; at the eastern extremity the

rock rises very precipitously, and the highest point is a mass of bluish-grey basalt, from which probably the city has derived its name of Ambòhimànga—*i.e.* "blue town." The only buildings visible from here, except those of a small suburb on the level ground to the eastward, are some of the royal houses in the *rova*, on the highest point of the hill, with the characteristic high-pitched roofs and horned gables. Passing round the base of the city to the eastward to reach the native chapel, we pass one of the gateways. This is a very massive and well-constructed piece of work, of dressed stone with a flat lintel, and several feet in depth. Soldiers are on guard at each side, and as we pass by, the officer takes our name in order to forward to his superiors at the capital. There is no admission here for Europeans. By treaty concluded between Queen Victoria and Queen Ràsohèrina, in 1865, it is expressly stipulated, that while English subjects shall have free permission to travel or reside in all parts of Madagascar where there are soldiers and officers of the Hova government, three places are excepted, and foreigners shall not enter into Ambòhimànga, Ambòhimànambòla, and Ampàrafàravàto.* The reason for such restrictions, as regards the first of these places, appears to be, that it is not only regarded as a specially sacred city, and is the place where the idol Fantàka is kept, but it also contains the tomb of Queen Rànavàlona, who is probably regarded as still retaining that dislike to Europeans and their religion which animated her during her long reign. Ambòhimànga is also the burialplace of Andrian-ìmpoin-Imérina, the father of Radàma I., the conqueror of Imérina and the neighbouring states, and the founder of the Malagasy power as it is now constituted. Here the late queen was

* Since repealed, through non-insertion in the French treaty, as well as from the destruction of the national idols.

accustomed to come every year, shortly after the new year's festival, to offer sacrifices and prayer and thanksgiving at the tombs of her renowned ancestors.

It is an encouraging fact, that notwithstanding the superstition and bigotry of many of the people of Ambòhimànga, a native church has been formed here; and although no Christian worship can be held or English missionaries allowed to preach within the city, there is no restriction upon either in the neat chapel near the eastern gate. One of the excellent native pastors is the son of the chief officer and commandant in the city, and to him belongs by descent the office of guardian of the idol kept there. He had at one time to endure much opposition from his heathen relatives, but his consistent and conciliatory conduct has overcome much of their opposition to his departure from the traditions of his ancestors.*

Ampàrafàravàto, the third of the places closed to Europeans, is a small and insignificant village about six miles to the north of Ambòhimànga. It derives its sanctity from being the traditional seat or place of origin of the national idol Rakèlimalàza, which was afterwards brought nearer the capital, and deposited at Ambòhimànambòla, the second of the forbidden places, about six miles to the eastward of Antanànarìvo. Near Ampàrafàravàto is situated almost the only structure in the central parts of the island approaching the character of an idol temple.

From the rising ground near Ambòhimànga we have an

* Since the above was written, another congregation has been formed at Ambòhimànga, and last year one of my friends had the pleasure of preaching upon the very spot where proclamation was made, about thirty-three years before, that there should be no more praying, "*màndrakizày, màndrakizày*,"—"for ever and ever." There he preached to many hundreds of people from the words, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God," etc.

extensive prospect over the undulating country between that place and the capital, and the green level rice-plain to the west and north-west. At about two miles distant to the south-east is a detached conical hill, upon which stands another of the sacred towns, having a lofty and conspicuous house among the trees. This is Ambòhitrabìby —that is, "the town of Rabìby." He was one of the early kings of this part of Imérina, and is reported to have been the first who introduced the custom of roasting and eating the flesh of animals, or rather of oxen. If these traditions have any groundwork of truth, the Hovas would seem to have been vegetarians previous to his time. He is also famed for having killed an immense and ferocious wild-boar; from this circumstance his name was changed to Ralàmbo—*làmbo* being the native word for that animal. All Malagasy sovereigns must be able to trace their descent from Ralàmbo by one line at least.

Another of the venerated ancient towns is Naméhana, situated on a low wooded hill about halfway between Ambòhimànga and the capital, but rather to the westward. A great extent of ground to the northward of the place is covered with marshes, which are used for the cultivation of *hèrana* and *zozòro*, the triangular rushes employed for roofing, partitions, and other purposes. These marshes abound at certain seasons of the year with waterfowl—wild ducks, herons, and birds resembling our snipe—affording excellent sport. It is of course necessary to go in canoes of light draught to get near the game. Gold and silver fish are plentiful in the water, and brilliant blue kingfishers dart over and under it; while there are numbers of waterlilies and other aquatic plants of new species to interest those of botanical tastes.

Leaving Ambòhimànga, we turn westward to visit Am-

bòhidratrìmo, another of the sacred places, about ten miles distant, across the valley of the Ikiòpa. Our road lies for a mile or two along the foot of a steep ascent, forming the termination of a range of hills which stretches far away to the northward. On the crest of this ridge, which has almost a wall-like appearance from a distance, is a small village called Ambòhitàny. This is the seat of the idol Ramàhavàly, who is considered the second in dignity and importance amongst the national gods. This idol is regarded as the patron or protector of serpents, and numbers of them are said to be found in the neighbourhood of the village. On occasions when it was wished to impress the people with the power of the idol, the attendants and keepers walked in procession, each man carrying a serpent held in a handful of dried grass. In 1829, after the accession of Queen Rànavàlona, when the position of Europeans was becoming more precarious, and the queen had become careless as to the annoyances to which they were subject, a gross insult was offered to Mr. Lyall, the British resident, with the connivance, or perhaps at the instigation, of the government. For some alleged offence given to the idol, the followers and guardians of Ramàhavàly were allowed to surround Mr. Lyall's house, and set free a number of serpents in his courtyard. Being obliged to leave his dwelling, and proceed under a guard to a village at some distance, he was followed by the idol's keeper, carrying it upon a pole covered with scarlet cloth. Behind him walked fifty athletic men, walking two abreast, having their bodies uncovered to the waist, each man bearing in his hand a serpent, which he held by means of a small quantity of straw. They moved along in profound silence, the men carrying the serpents frequently lifting the hand in which the reptile was carried, and exhibiting it to the

spectators as it twined its slimy folds round his hand and arm.* The people were thus impressed with the idea that the British resident was peculiarly obnoxious to the idol, and that the serpents were its emissaries and the visible agents of its vengeance.

This neighbourhood appears to be quite the cradle of the idolatry and legendary beliefs of the Hova tribes. Within a short distance from each other are the three towns already mentioned, from which has originated the worship of the three most famous idols of Imérina—Rakèlimalàza, Fantàka, and Ramàhavàly. Not only so, but a few miles to the north-west is a conspicuous mountain, called Andrìngitra, where another famous idol, Rànakàudrìana, was supposed to live, and to favour all who saluted him with audible responses. Within sight of this point also is the ancient town called Ambòhidrapèto. This place was the village of Rapèto, a wonderful mythological personage, of whom extraordinary stories are related. He is said to have been a giant, and to have come originally from Ambòhimangàvo, one of the highest mountains in Imérina, distant about fifty miles westward of the capital. On its summit his tomb is still shown, and sacrifices and prayers were formerly offered there in his honour. "The powers of Rapèto were of the most marvellous kind. He could, it is said, fetch anything from the farthest extremities of the earth, and could even at a stretch reach the sky. One single step of his would be equal to the distance of six days' journey of an ordinary man. When visited by strangers he would, without moving from his seat, merely stretch out his hand and procure abundance of fowls, sheep, and bullocks. Wishing occasionally for a few dainties at his table, he produced the beautiful and extensive lake Itàsy,

* "History of Madagascar," vol. ii. p. 419.

which abounds to this day with excellent fish. On one occasion he had a serious quarrel with the moon, with whom he fought; but, notwithstanding his gigantic size and strength, he was vanquished and slain."*

Ambòhidratrìmo has an equally picturesque situation with the other sacred places; but its peculiarity consists in the curious arrangements of the interior of its old royal houses. There is the usual grove of old *àviàvy* covering the hill, but amongst them are two magnificent trees called *amòntana,* which tower over the rest, and whose domelike mass of foliage is visible from a great distance. The amòntana appears to belong to the same botanical class as the indiarubber tree, bearing large glossy leaves, which exude a milky glutinous juice when broken off. It is found in many parts of Imérina, and is valued for its timber, which is hard and durable. Within the ròva or palisaded courtyard are the old royal houses, arranged in a line, one of them being very lofty, and another leaning over bodily in an odd-looking fashion.† The entrance to these houses seems curiously inconvenient of access, the threshold of the doors being raised about three feet from the ground, so that one has to step over by means of stones placed inside and out. The roof is supported by three enormous posts, fifty or sixty feet high to the ridge, and nearly two feet in diameter. At one corner of the house is a square platform raised by posts ten or twelve feet above the ground. We were informed that this strange structure was the bedstead of the chief formerly the lord of the town and the surrounding country. Wondering how he managed to get

* "History of Madagascar," vol. i. p. 90.

† This is not an uncommon occurrence in timber houses in Imérina, for there is a general absence of anything to act as a brace or strut in the wooden framework.

into bed, we were pointed to one of the posts supporting the platform, which was notched at the angles. This served as a ladder for ascending to his couch. All around the house was a number of shelves, upon which were placed an immense quantity of rice-jars, cooking-pots, and baskets of all sizes and shapes. These were the household properties of the former owners, and are preserved with religious reverence. Many of the baskets contained sampys, or charms, to ward off evil from the dwelling and kingdom.

At the time of our visit, the village contained a small native congregation, but on account of its distance from the city it could not be visited so frequently as the nearer places. From this cause, as well as the superstition of the people, it seemed in a weak and languishing condition; but the members eagerly asked us for a supply of books, and begged for more frequent visitation. Many of the heathen inhabitants also with whom we conversed seemed inquiring, and disposed to listen to what we told them. Since that time a larger number have put themselves under instruction, more frequent visits have been made by English and native pastors from Antanànarìvo, and Christian influence is gaining ground in the village and the neighbourhood.

From Ambòhidratrìmo to the capital is a ride of two or three hours, the greater part of the distance being traversed upon the high embankments of the river Ikiòpa. Those who are accustomed to think of the Malagasy as a race of barbarians would be astonished to see the extensive works which the Hova chieftains carried out more than 150 years ago for the embanking of the river, and the irrigation of the extensive plains through which it flows. Each side of the stream for many miles is skilfully inclosed with banks, and through sluices its waters are conducted by canals all over the plain, and are distributed over every rice-field. These

extensive engineering works are said to have been executed chiefly by Andriamàsinavàlona, and much care and attention are required every rainy season to keep them in proper repair.

The rainy season in Madagascar lasts for about five months, from the beginning of November to the middle of April. In the early part of the year it occasionally rains for three or four days together, and in some years for a week without cessation, and with a violence and heaviness only seen in tropical countries. The streams from the forests and higher parts of Imérina soon swell the Ikiòpa to many times its usual depth and volume, and it rolls along its channel with a rapid and powerful current, threatening to carry away everything opposing its course. At such times the greatest watchfulness is necessary to detect the slightest symptom of weakness in any part of the embankments, and the whole population is sometimes summoned at a moment's notice to assist in stopping the gap, and preserving their rice-fields from inundation.

In the early months of 1863, the greater part of the plain of Bétsimitàtatra to the west and north-west of the capital was laid under water through a breach made in one of the banks, and presented the appearance of a vast lake from the heights of the city. In January, 1868, the rains were unusually heavy, and after several days' downfall the river became brimful, running nine or ten feet above the level of the rice-grounds. At last the bank gave way at a part directly westward from Antanànarìvo, the water pouring through with a terrific force. It was Friday, the market-day at the capital, and the people were immediately ordered out from the city to stop the breach. By Saturday afternoon it was pretty well secured, when it burst again, and all Sunday was spent in attempting to repair the damage

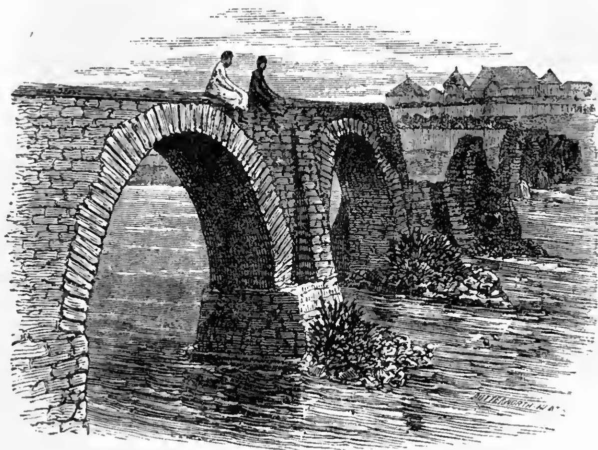
No meetings could be held for worship, as every man, woman, and child was commanded to help; the European residents also went out, and some of them assisted to superintend various portions of the work. By Monday morning it was half stopped up, when away it went again; however, by dint of numbers and perseverance, it was at last conquered, and on Wednesday the damage was effectually repaired. It is said that not less than fifty thousand people were assembled at the place. They came not only from the neighbourhood, but also from Vònizòngo, the next province to the west; from Itàsy, fifty miles distant; and from the southern districts of Imérina. Fascines of branches were made by parties of people in the villages near the spot, and brought by others to fill up the gap. It is not wonderful that such exertions should be made, when we remember that, had the plain been flooded, a great part of the rice-crop, then nearly ripe, would have been spoiled, and a famine caused. A good deal of damage was done, but the prompt and energetic measures taken prevented it from reaching a serious extent.

About thirty miles farther down the river is a waterfall, or rather a cataract, called Ifàrahàntsana, formed by a bar of broken rocks across, the bed of the Ikiòpa. In dry weather, when the stream is low, there is not much to interest; but when the river is swollen by the heavy rains of the wet season, it forms a considerable fall, the noise of which is heard for several miles. The loudness of the roar of the waters has given rise to several proverbs and adages in common use amongst the people of the surrounding country; and, in proclamations of the sovereign, the total destruction of any living thing that might chance to be swept over the rocks at Ifàrahàntsana is used as a bold and striking metaphor for irrecoverable loss, as the following

extracts from a royal message will show. It was issued in March, 1835, when Queen Rànavàlona and her advisers had determined upon the utter extinction of Christianity as far as it was in their power to effect it. The queen sent word to the people that those of the officers who had become Christians, or taken any part in religious teaching, should lose their honours, and she expressed her will to this effect: "The honours bestowed on you, therefore, since you have so transgressed my laws as to deserve death—and your lives are only spared through the supplications of Imérina —your honours, I say, will I throw into yonder river, to be carried over yonder cataract, Ifàrahàntsana; for you have endeavoured to change the customs of our ancestors. There *half* the honours of some of you shall be thrown, and the *third* part of the honours of others, and even *all* the honours which some possess, shall be thrown into yonder river; but the precise number shall be in proportion to their offences." In a similar manner did the queen declare that the rank of the other classes who had embraced Christianity should be diminished; and in her pride of power and irresponsible authority, she scornfully told all the Christians that, had it not been for the supplications of the rest of the people, who united in a body to crave pardon on their behalf, "I would have driven you all down yonder river, until you had been dashed over the cataract."

In approaching Antanànarìvo from Tamatave we pass over two or three stone bridges, consisting of a single arch, which cross the streams near the capital; but the most advanced specimens of bridge-building to be found in the country are those which span the river Ikiòpa, to the west and south of the city. The largest is at Ambàniàla, due west, where the river is from two to three hundred feet in width. It is a rude-looking structure to European eyes,

consisting of a number of round arches of various dimensions, and carrying a path (for it cannot be called a roadway) about five feet broad. This bridge appears to have been left unfinished, for the spaces over each pier are not filled up level with the crown of the arches, and consequently the upper part presents a wavy line instead of a flat surface, so that it requires considerable care in climbing up and down the rough stonework. In one part the arch has given



BRIDGE AT TÀNJOMBÀTO.

way, and its place is supplied by a canoe placed across the opening. The piers are large and clumsy, and in one or two cases occupy as much space as the waterway, like some of our ancient bridges in England. The chief road to the west of the island passes over this rude piece of masonry.

About two miles farther up the stream, at Tànjombàto, directly south from the city, is another bridge of much superior workmanship. It consists of ten arches; the

masonry of the greater part is well put together, and the finish of the whole much in advance of any similar work in the country. Unfortunately, however, the Malagasy engineers did not properly estimate the force of the current when flooded, nor did they understand our system of cofferdamming, or the proper method of putting in foundations under water. The piers seem to have been built upon masses of rock and stone thrown loosely into the stream, and the consequence is, that the rush of the water, when swollen by heavy rains, has undermined the foundations, so that some of the arches have given way, and now lie in ruins in the bed of the river. Those which remain, although unequal in dimensions, are well-built, and had equal care been taken with the substructure, would probably have stood for a long period. The pathway, about six feet in width, is without parapets, but is perfectly level and smooth, and is finished with a bold round moulding as a cornice.

There are several other bridges in this direction, but the one at Tànjombàto is perhaps the best of the whole. These structures were mostly built by Radàma II. before he became king, and during his mother Rànavàlona's sovereignty. He and a number of his friends, chiefly young men, seem to have taken great interest in improving the means of communication in the neighbourhood of the capital; and these bridges were constructed under their superintendence. Their erection is certainly one amongst many other proofs of the ease with which the Malagasy can be taught the arts of European civilisation, and of their quickness in imitating any pattern put before them. They are entirely of native design, and when asked how they came to construct such works, they replied that, having seen pictures of bridges in English books, they did their best to copy them as closely

as practicable. The people of Madagascar want but a little instruction and superintendence to fit them to execute any architectural or engineering works.

As we return to the city from Tànjombàto, we pass, about halfway between the two places, a large timber house called Isòanieràna. The meaning of this word is, "a place well suited for inquiry" or resort; the name was given by Radàma I. to signify the convenience of the spot for dispensing justice, and hearing the complaints and grievances of his subjects. The house, or palace, as it might be called, is of large size and square in plan, measuring 120 feet in length by about 100 feet in breadth. It is built entirely of timber, and contains about forty principal rooms, besides a number of smaller ones. Some of these are of large dimensions, the centre one running nearly the whole length of the building; but they are spoilt for want of proportionate height. The palace consists of two storeys, and the roof, covered with shingles, is constructed in three divisions running lengthwise. The walls are well finished outside with massive diagonal boarding, and lined with wainscoting. A balcony supported on semicircular arches, with ornamental iron railing, runs round the building; and at the north and south ends, where the chief entrances are placed, there are recesses with open verandahs, carried by massive posts of hard red timber. The floors are inlaid, and the walls panelled with a variety of ornamental woods, and are all well executed, The kitchen and passage leading to it are wholly subterranean, the former being 200 feet from the main building.

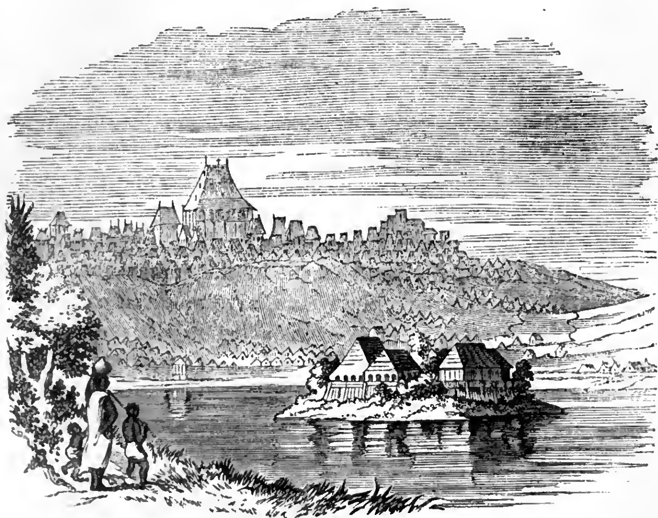
This remarkable structure was built for Radàma I. by M. Le Gros, and is a very creditable specimen of the ingenuity and skill of Malagasy workmen. The architect, however, made a serious error in the form of roof he adopted

for such a large building in a country exposed to heavy tropical rains. An immense quantity of water falls upon the large surface of the roof in a single night during the wet season, and, as the two valleys or hollows between the ridges are quite inadequate to carry it off sufficiently fast, the main upright timbers supporting the building are rotting away with the moisture, and have to be propped up to keep them from giving way altogether.

The palace is rarely used now for state purposes, and is inhabited only by a few servants to keep it in order. All round the house, at about forty feet distance, is a massive and well-wrought iron chain with square links. This, as well as the iron railings of the balcony, was made under the superintendence of Mr. Chick, one of the artisans attached to the first mission. The site on which the palace stands is a very fine one. It is a large irregularly circular piece of ground, elevated about fifty or sixty feet above the plain. An immense hill was cut down with incredible labour, to afford room for the building and the space surrounding it; and another hill to the northward was also to have been removed, to improve the view and the approaches. At some distance from the house it is circled by a treble row of trees, forming a pleasant shady walk. From the northern front is a commanding view of the steep and rocky southern end of the city, with the Ambòhipòtsy memorial church crowning its highest point.

A walk or ride round the base of the hill upon which Antanànarìvo is built, presents a great variety of picturesque and striking scenes. It takes nearly two hours to make the circuit on foot, and at every few yards we meet with fresh combinations. To the west we have precipices from two to three hundred feet in height, in some places overhanging the roadway. At certain points to the south

hardly a house is visible, and the hill looks like a vast rocky cone rising above the plain. From the east we get the most unbroken view of the capital as a whole, and at the foot of the steep slopes there are many pretty winding paths, between orchards and green hedges, along the greater part of this side of the city. The views from the north, again, are quite different, long slopes stretching down to the plain by gradual descents. Go where we may, we shall meet at every turn something to interest; a landscape artist might fill his portfolio with sketches illustrating the picturesque situation of the "city of a thousand towns."



ANTANÀNARÌVO, FROM THE QUEEN'S LAKE.

CHAPTER VII.

SOCIAL CUSTOMS OF THE MALAGASY.

General similarity of customs all over the island—Kindness of disposition—Absence of gross cruelty—High position of woman—Betrothal—Marriage—Intermarriage of relatives—Restrictions—Description of wedding ceremonies—Birth of children—Licentiousness—Polygamy and its evils—The "twelve wives" of the sovereign—The vàdy-kèly or secondary wife—Divorce—Adoption—Malagasy names—Custom of being called after their children—Length of some names—Timber houses—Arrangement of houses in Imérina—High-pitched roofs—Thatching—Horned gables—Interior and furniture of houses—"The ancient soot"—Measures of time—Sundial—Names of months of Arabic origin—Fortunate and unlucky days—Clay houses—Introduction of sun-dried brick—Modern style of houses—Curious use of points of compass—Salutations—Politeness—Food—Plentifulness—Rice—Its cooking used as a measure of time—Beverages—Use of tobacco as snuff—Hemp-smoking.

THERE is much general resemblance in the manners and customs and social usages of the Malagasy, notwithstanding the great extent of the country, and the comparatively scattered and separated condition of its inhabitants. Differing to a certain degree in their origin, at any rate in the date of their settlement in the country, the different tribes throughout the island have much in common. Their language, as we shall see, is substantially one; their ancient form of government, by chiefs, was pretty uniform in character; their religious ideas were evidently derived from one source; and the customs of ordeal by the *tangéna*, divination, and circumcision, were observed all over the island, although with slight local differences in the ceremonies attending them. Such considerations are strong arguments for believing the majority of the inhabitants of Madagascar to come from a common stock, for the national

dislike to change and innovation obviously does not explain this uniformity of custom.

There is much that is gratifying to a benevolent mind in the strong family affection and general kindness of heart that exist amongst the Malagasy people. In these respects they differ remarkably from most other semicivilised nations, and in some points might even set an example to those who pride themselves upon their superior culture. Their idolatrous system never had the cruel repulsive character which heathenism commonly presents. The practices of human sacrifice,* suttee, self-torture, and mortification are unknown to the Malagasy, and their absence has no doubt tended to preserve a higher tone of humane and kindly feeling than is usually found in non-Christian nations. It is true that formerly infanticide, to a certain and limited extent, was practised, but it was resorted to under a belief that children born on certain unlucky days would be exposed to every kind of misfortune if allowed to live. With this exception it is undeniable that there was an absence of most of those revolting and barbarous usages so frequently found in connection with idolatry both in Polynesia, China, and India. A strong mutual affection between parents and children, and between members of the same family, respect and care for the aged and infirm and sick, and ardent love for their children, are general traits of character amongst the Malagasy.

Much of the cruelty and indifference to human suffering which undoubtedly existed during the reigns of Radàma I. and Rànavàlona were either directly or indirectly caused by European influence. The misery caused by the slave-trade was a direct result of the cupidity and heartlessness of

* With the exception of one tribe in the south-east of the island. See chapter xiv.

foreigners, while the desolating wars carried on by both these sovereigns were an indirect and unintended consequence of the very measures used by the English Government to put a stop to the slave traffic.

The position which woman holds in any society is perhaps no mean test of its advance, or otherwise, beyond a barbarous state; and although women in Madagascar are not respected and honoured as in Europe, neither are they made the slaves and drudges, as is usual in barbarous and semicivilised countries; nor are they scorned as essentially inferior to men, as is commonly the case in most Asiatic nations. The marriage tie is too easily severed, and too entirely in the power of the husband's caprice, to allow to the wife the security she ought to enjoy; yet public opinion acts as a restriction upon such power being very arbitrarily exercised; and women have an influence and position of considerable importance. The mere fact that the royal dignity is not confined to one sex, but is frequently held by a female sovereign, is in itself a proof that women are not regarded as necessarily inferior creatures. No possible mark of honour and respect shown to a king is withheld from a queen, who, indeed, has been sometimes regarded with a chivalric devotion far more in accordance with Western than Eastern ideas. Female chiefs have frequently succeeded to great power and influence; some are now intrusted with extensive authority, one having the rank of the 13th Honour; and on the east coast a Bétsimisàraka princess has, for many years, been regarded as one of the wisest and most sagacious counsellors of the Hova government.

Children are frequently betrothed in Madagascar at a very early age, often indeed before they can understand the nature of the engagement; and as such arrangements

BÉTSIMISÀRAKA WOMAN AND CHILD.

are usually made by their parents for the purpose of keeping property together, and for other family reasons, those most interested have little chance of consulting their own preferences in the matter. A dowry is generally given by the bride's parents, and this is usually claimed again by them in case of a divorce; but the bridegroom also sometimes gives such presents as may have been agreed upon previously. A feast is often made at the betrothal, and the members of the family and other friends are invited to the usual eating of rice and beef which accompanies every occasion of importance in Madagascar. Except between certain degrees of consanguinity hereafter mentioned, the Malagasy seem to prefer to marry relatives or connections of their own family, than to seek for a husband or wife elsewhere. This is mostly for the purpose of keeping land and other property in the family; but is probably caused to some extent as well by their strong clannish or tribal instincts, as is the case with many Eastern nations from the earliest times to the present day.*

People of certain differing grades of rank or social position may not intermarry. Some classes of *andrians*, or nobles, must not marry apart from their own tribe; nor may a noble marry a *hòva*, or commoner. A hova may not marry a *zàza-hòva*, or one reduced to slavery; nor may a zaza-hova marry an *andèvo*, one who is descended from the class of slaves. There is, however, a humane and just law, one of many Malagasy customs which resemble those of the Jews—that if a free man marry a slave woman he must previously redeem her, and so make her his equal in social position; and this freedom she retains if divorced.†

The restrictions upon the marriage of relatives are chiefly with respect to those connected on the female side. It is a

* Gen. xxiv. 7; xxviii. 2, 9.

† See Exod. xxi. 7, 10.

significant fact, and shows the lax state of morals, that the descent of sovereigns and nobles is reckoned through the female rather than the male line, as it is argued that the descent can be proved from the mother, while it is often impossible to know the paternity of a child. Cousins very frequently intermarry, except the children of two sisters by the same mother, and their descendants down to four generations. It is often difficult to ascertain exactly the relationship of members of a family, for first-cousins are usually termed brother and sister, and uncles and aunts—father and mother respectively; and it is only by asking distinctly of persons whether they are "of one father," or are "uterine brother or sister," that we learn the exact degree of relationship. These secondary fathers and mothers seem often to be regarded with little less affection than the actual parents.

Marriages are celebrated at a very early age; twelve or fourteen years is not an unusual time for both sexes, and they frequently become parents shortly after that period. The ceremonies are not numerous, but are simple and appropriate enough, varying to some extent with the social position and wealth of each party. A few words descriptive of a marriage feast at which some of us were present will probably give a better idea of the proceedings than any more formal account.

The bride in this instance was a pretty girl of thirteen or fourteen years old, who had been a pupil in the mission school at Ambàtonakànga church. Her father was a deacon, and also the superintending foreman of the work at the stone church then building. The bridegroom, a good-looking lad of fourteen or fifteen years, was also connected with the same congregation. Accompanied by their relatives and friends, the happy pair were brought in the fore-

noon to the temporary chapel, carried in their palanquins; for while the national marriage customs were innocent enough, it had been thought right to urge upon the Christian part of the community to precede the legal ceremony by a religious service in the church. After the service had been read, the ring placed on the finger, and the book signed and witnessed—all very much in the same way as would be done in England—we accompanied the party to the house of the bride's father. Here a feast was being prepared, and the relatives were assembled. The young married people were seated together, one handsome silk lamba being thrown round them both; and as soon as rice and other food had been brought in, *one* dish was placed before them, from which they both ate, apparently as a symbol of the future unity of their interests.

The bride's father then made a speech, formally announcing to those present that his daughter had become the wife of their friend, thanking them for their presence and sympathy, and invoking a blessing upon the newly-married pair. Good wishes and congratulations were then expressed by one of the guests, as spokesman for the company, and also by the English missionary who was present; and all then partook of the food, which consisted of rice, meat in a variety of dishes, bananas, peaches, and other fruit. After a little time, the party proceeded to the house of the bridegroom's father, which happened to be near to the other, and here the same ceremonies were repeated and similar complimentary speeches made. A piece of money was handed to an officer of the palace for presentation to the queen, this being considered as the legal completion of the marriage.

In places at a distance from the capital, the bride and bridegroom are carried in the palanquin to the chief house

of the village where they reside, and the *hàsina*, or money, is delivered to the headman, as representative of the sovereign. In Antanànarìvo they seemed to be frequently taken for a ride, followed by their friends on foot, singing and rejoicing. Both bride and bridegroom are generally dressed as handsomely as the means of the family will allow, and are adorned with the richest silk lambas and the most costly jewellery that can be procured for the occasion.

The birth of children does not appear to be the cause of so much solicitude and anxiety to Malagasy mothers as is generally the case with people in a high state of civilisation, nor is it, except in rare instances, accompanied by peril to life. Shortly before childbirth is expected a portion of the house is screened off by mats from the rest of the apartment, and a bed prepared for the mother. A wood-fire is kindled, and continues burning for several days, even in the warm season, so that a considerable degree of heat is kept up. The Malagasy consider that warmth is a very essential element in all nursing, and contributes very much to speedy convalescence. It is usual to send messages to relatives and friends informing them of the birth of a child, and they in return forward pieces of money to the mother, intimating that it is to buy *kitày-hàzo, i.e.* wood-fuel, for the purpose of keeping up the heat they regard as so necessary. It is also considered a kind and polite attention to call and personally congratulate the parents and relatives on the new addition to their family. Several forms of blessing are used, most of which recognise God as the giver of life. On such occasions we usually found the mother sitting up on the mattress, which was laid upon the floor, while the infant was being nursed by its grandmother or some near relative. After a space

of from two or three days to a week at the outside, the woman resumes her ordinary household duties.

Children are much prized by the Malagasy; but large families are rare, and a considerable proportion of married people are childless. This is no doubt owing, in part, to the early age at which marriages take place, but more to the physical evils arising from licentious habits; for while adultery is regarded as a crime, profligate conduct between unmarried people is hardly looked upon as an offence. It is true that a higher standard of morals is gradually being established through the influence of Christianity and English ideas, but there is still much room for improvement.

Infants are occasionally suckled by the mother to a much later age than is common in Europe, and it strikes a foreigner as an absurdity to see hearty boys of two or three years old running after their mother to beg for the breast. Children are carried sometimes upon the hip, but more frequently on the back, supported by the nurse's lamba being tightly fastened round her waist. The grown-up young people occasionally present a piece of money to their mothers, called *fòfon'damòsina*, *i.e.* "fragrance of the back," as a grateful remembrance of the time when they were carefully nursed and carried in the folds of their parents' lamba. Fathers generally carry the children seated on their shoulders.

Polygamy exists in Madagascar, and is, as it always must be, a source of much family discord and division; but it is not by any means of universal prevalence. Men of the lower classes have, as a rule, but one wife; and the contrary custom appears to be confined to those of higher rank and more ample property. Few have more than two wives, and the king alone has the privilege of having twelve. Twelve, however, as we have seen in speaking of the twelve

sacred cities of Imérina, is used rather as a definite number denoting the perfection and completeness of everything relating to royalty, than as any right actually exercised. Probably no sovereign has ever availed himself of this very questionable privilege, at any rate at one time. But there are a number of old ladies who are called "the twelve wives," and all important political measures must, as a matter of form, be submitted for their approval. Even a queen has these twelve wives, who appear to be regarded as a kind of inner council of state. But, whatever may formerly have been their influence, their functions have become virtually obsolete in the modern arrangements of the Malagasy government. The twelve wives belong to a past age, and have now no real power.

When a second wife is taken she is termed the *vàdy-kély*, or little wife, the first one being styled *ràmatòa*, the elder or mistress. Although holding an acknowledged secondary position, the second wife has her rights of property, etc., defined as distinctly as the first one, and her children inherit—there being little if any difference between them and those of the first wife.

Polygamy naturally brings with it a frequent recurrence to divorce, and perhaps in the absolute power possessed by the husband in this matter lies the greatest injustice to which Malagasy women are subjected. For a very trifling offence a wife can be put away; and it is said that in certain cases the husband has the right to divorce her so that she can never marry again. This is probably a very rare occurrence, and is similar to some of those unjust and cruel laws found in the statute-books of most countries, which, although they might be legally enforced, would be condemned by the general voice of society. The Malagasy terms both for polygamy and divorce are interesting ex-

amples of the history which is sometimes embodied in words. Polygamy is called *fampòrafèsana*, a word which means, literally, "that which produces enmity or strife:" a significant witness, in the very language, of the jealousy and hatred and contention of which this practice is the almost inevitable cause. The word for divorce is *fisaòrambàdy*, *i.e.* "thanking or blessing a wife"—a striking example of the tendency in human nature to soften an evil thing by calling it by a mild name. Instead of telling of the injustice and hardship generally produced by its exercise, the native word for divorce would imply a parting gift or blessing upon the wife as one who is no longer wanted, and thanks for her kindness in the past.

Notwithstanding what has been just stated, there seems to be a large proportion of married people who are faithful to each other, who have strong mutual affection, and who would never dream of allowing anything but death to dissolve their union. From the fact of many people having no offspring, the adoption of other children, generally those of relatives, is of frequent occurrence. These children are regarded in every respect as if they were born of their adopted parents, and their real father and mother give up all claim to them.

There are no family names in Madagascar; and as some of the names which are given are in common use, it is often very difficult to know who is meant. This is to some extent obviated by adding to the name that of some relative, as "son of," "wife of," "father of," such and such a person; but to a European it seems hard to understand how individuals can be distinguished from one another without the use of more distinctive names. Any word or particle can be made into a personal name by prefixing the syllables "Ra" or "Andriana." The names of animals are

constantly used: thus, *biby*, beast; *làmbo*, wild hog; *màmba*, crocodile, and many others, are of frequent occurrence in Malagasy names. Two young men of high rank, who, with several others, were sent to be educated in England, were known by the names of Vòalàvo and Totòsy, *i.e.* "rat" and "mouse." The combinations are often curious, especially if the people get hold of a foreign word, which they combine with one of their own. A little fellow in the day-school at Ambàtonakànga rejoiced in the name of Ra-monsieur, somewhat altered in spelling to suit the phonetic style of Malagasy orthography. Since the introduction of Christianity, names taken from the Bible are often given; and John, Jonah, Caleb, Samuel, David, and Mary, are used, generally with the addition of the native prefix.

The Malagasy have a singular custom of taking the name of their eldest child, with the word *raini*, "father of," prefixed. Thus, for example, if a man called Rabé has a child born to whom the name Rasòa is given, he drops his original name, and becomes Raini-soa, *i.e.* "father of Soa." So, again, the ex-prime minister's name was Rahàro; having a son born to him when somewhat advanced in life, he named him Ravòninàhitrìniòny, and from that time has been known as Raini-vòninàhitrìniòny. This word is an example of the inordinate length of some Malagasy names, although it is an extreme case; and I have never heard of one that was longer, except the sacred name of the old Queen Rànavàlona, and by which she is always mentioned in kabarys and royal speeches, viz. Rabòdon'àndrian-impòin-Imérina. The meaning of this, is simply, "the dear (or darling) of Andrian-impòin-Imérina," *i.e.* "the prince in the heart of Imérina." The ex-prime minister's name denotes, "Father of the flower of the grass of the river." It is almost equalled in length by that of the present premier

Rainilàiàrivòny, and by that of another high officer, Ravòninàhitrìniarìvo. Much shorter names are, however, very common—as Razày, Ratàvy, Ravèlo, and others. The prefix "Ra" is used for both sexes, but "Andriana" is applied to masculine names only. Women are occasionally known as Réni, *i.e.* mother of such and such a one; and both women and men often retain their first names, and are called indifferently by either. The custom of being known by the child's name is an illustration of the pride felt in having descendants—somewhat of the same feeling that the noble Roman matron Cornelia expressed in the words, "Call me not Scipio's daughter; call me the mother of the Gracchi."*

Elderly married women have ordinarily the word Ràmatòa prefixed to their names as a title of respect. Names are not given at any particular period, or with any ceremony, except in the case of Christian baptism; and some children's names are mere indications of their age with respect to the rest. The eldest son is often called Àndriamatòa, the eldest daughter Ràmatòa; intermediate sons are styled Àndrianàivo, and the daughters, Raivo or Ranivo; while the youngest boy is frequently named Rafàralàhy, "last male," and the youngest girl Rafàravàvy, "last female." Before a special name is given, boys often go for years by the name of Rakòto, "the lad;" and girls as Rakètaka, "the lass;" and in many cases they receive no other name. This syllable "Ra" is often prefixed to the native words for man, woman, brother, sister, children, etc., as a respectful mode of address in speaking of or to people, especially if their name is not known; thus, in asking one's way of a woman who was a stranger, it would be polite to address her as Rànabàvy, "sister;" and so with

* A similar custom prevails amongst the Arabs. See Kitto's "Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature," art. "Name."

other persons, according to their sex or age. Old people are generally addressed as Ikaiky and Inény, familiar words for father and mother which have no exact parallel in our own language.

The Malagasy seem to have attained to considerable proficiency in building houses even before they learnt superior methods by intercourse with Europeans. They are expert in the use of tools, and with implements which would be almost useless to an English carpenter, they will produce joiners' and cabinet-work of a very excellent character. With one or two exceptions, stone is not used for dwellings, owing to the hardness of the material and cost of working it, as well as the dearness of lime; but timber houses of large size have been erected at Antanànarìvo and other towns of the central province, and some of these have probably been standing for nearly two centuries. As previously mentioned, the capital and the other ancient and sacred towns of Imérina must not be defiled by the presence of any houses but those made of wood,* so that the residences of all the principal people are of this material; and even in the country, where no such restrictions exist, a timber house was until very lately regarded as the only proper dwelling for a person of wealth and rank.

Leaving to another chapter a description of the royal palaces, it may be remarked that the typical form of a Malagasy house of the ancient fashion is a simple oblong, from twelve or fourteen feet to thirty or forty feet long, the breadth being about two-thirds of the length. The walls are sometimes as high as the house is long, and are constructed of thick planks set upright, and kept in their places by a framework of massive corner-posts and wall-plates, which are of course set up first. The planks are

* This law has been repealed since the above sentences were written.

grooved at the edges, and between each is inserted a piece of the tough fibrous bark of the tree-fern. The timbers are placed as closely together as possible, so that if the wood shrinks, the outer air may still be excluded by the tenon of bark. Besides this, the top of each plank is mortised into a groove in the underside of the wall-plate, and the foot is let into the ground for a few inches. The walls are further stiffened by each plank being pierced transversely, and a long piece of tree-fern-bark passed through them, so that the outside faces of the planking are all kept evenly together.

In the old houses in Imérina the door is always placed at the western side of the building,* and at the southern end, close to the corner-post. The doorway is often very high and narrow, and in some instances the threshold rises a foot or two above the ground, inside and out, so that entrance and exit are somewhat inconvenient; a piece of stone is generally placed as a step on either side. The doors used to be frequently made of one piece of wood, requiring of course a tree of very large size to supply the material. Instead of metal hinges, a projecting piece at the top and bottom was let into a socket in the lintel and threshold. These old doors are now becoming scarce, for being generally made of hard wood, and being well-seasoned by exposure, they have been in great request for making furniture.

Except in houses of large size there is but one window, and that is placed, like the door, on the west side, at the southern end of the house, so that both openings are protected from the prevailing south-east winds. A wooden shutter closes the window, which is placed rather high in the wall. In some cases another small window is placed at

* See chapters v. and vi.

the north end, but there is seldom any glass fixed in either, a muslin curtain often serving instead. The same Malagasy word (*vàravàrana*) is used both for "door" and "window," the only distinction being that one is called "large" and the other "small" (*varavaran-bé* and *varavaran-kély*).

The oldfashioned roofs are of enormously high pitch; they do not rest entirely upon the framework of the building, but are formed by three stout poles being erected, one at

NATIVE HOUSES (OLD STYLE.).

each end, just within the walls, and the other in the centre of the house. These poles reach to the ridge, which rests upon them; rafters are brought down from ridge to wall-plate, and on these a crossed framework of slender tapering bamboos is tied with strong grass. Upon this the thatch is laid. This roof-covering consists of a triangular rush, called *hèrana*. A number of rushes are doubled over a

piece of osier about three or four feet long, and thus arranged are handed up to the thatcher on the point of a bamboo, who rapidly ties them to the framework previously laid, fastening each set of rushes an inch or two higher than the lower one. This thatch makes a durable waterproof covering, if the roof is not too low in pitch. It is often a foot or more in thickness, and when cut smoothly and trimmed at the edges and eaves has a very neat appearance. The ridge is covered with a certain kind of grass, and is pointed with clay, which sets hard if done at the proper season. The gables are also thatched, and are finished with a kind of outside rafter, the ends of which fit into one another and cross, projecting more or less above the ridge. These *tàndro'tràno* or "house-horns," as they are called, are sometimes only a few inches in length, and are simply ornamented by notching at the ends; but in the case of large houses belonging to people of rank, they project several feet, and have in many instances a small wooden figure of a bird fastened to them. These crossed horns give a peculiar and perfectly unique character to the houses of the Hovas. The other tribes do not adopt this kind of roof ornament. There is no chimney, the smoke of the wood or dried-grass fire finding its exit by a small opening or window in the north gable.

The interior of a Malagasy house of the poorer class, where unaltered by the influence of European ideas, is not often very attractive. The walls are covered with mats of fine straw, hiding the rough inside of the woodwork, and the plastering of clay and cowdung with which the joints and crevices are filled up. The floor is generally of clay, beaten hard, and sometimes matted; no chairs or tables are seen, but a clean mat is brought out and unrolled for visitors to sit down upon. In the north-west corner

is the hearth, a square of two or three feet each way, with half-a-dozen stones for supporting the cooking utensils. Five or six feet above this, a rack of bamboos is often fixed, on which things can be dried in the smoke of the wood-fire. At the north-east corner is a large square bedstead, often a fixture, with a thin mattress or sleeping-mats. The furniture of the house comprises a few rolls of mats, water-jars, rice-cooking pots, large square straw baskets for holding rice or manioc, some drinking-horns, a few rough-looking knives, perhaps a spear or two, and occasionally a large wooden chest for keeping clothes and other valuables.

Against the northern roof-post, a small basket, shaped something like a bottle, is frequently hung; it has a kind of lid over the neck, and when examined will be found to contain sometimes a piece of stone, sometimes a bit of wood, a leaf of a tree, or a flower of certain plants. This worthless-looking rubbish is the household *sàmpy*, or charm, which is trusted in and prayed to as a protection from evil.

Houses are often open to the ridge, but generally a room is formed in the roof, sometimes taking in a part of the upright walls. This upper chamber is reached by a ladder or steep staircase, with uncomfortably high steps; and the floor being laid with clay, it is frequently used as a kitchen and eating-room. The roof is black and shiny with the smoke from the wood or grass fire, and the soot hangs in long pendants; for the Malagasy do not think of removing it, but rather take a pride in it as evidence of an ancient family having for a long time occupied the dwelling. Almost everyone lives in his own house; a very few only are rented from other people. From this circumstance, the people are sometimes complimented in proclamations by the sovereign by being styled "the ancient soot!"

In the country districts the fowls, pigs, and even cattle are sometimes kept at the southern end of the house. When travelling at a distance from Antanànarivo, these, to us, unaccustomed companions were a source of no little annoyance, as they persisted in occupying their usual abodes, and when turned out at one opening would enter at another, with a grunting and cackling defiance of our endeavours to obtain undisturbed possession.

Before the introduction of clocks and watches, which are still rare, except amongst wealthy people, time was marked by a kind of natural dial, made by the points reached by the sun's rays in different parts of the house throughout the day. The following list, together with the divisions of the night, was given to me by an intelligent Malagasy, and illustrates incidentally some of the habits and the daily life of the people, especially those living in the country :—

Malagasy Term.	Meaning.	Hour of Day.
1. Vaki-maso-andro.	Daybreak.	About 6 o'clock.
2. Maim-bohon-dravina.	Dry back of the leaf (*i.e.* when the dew is dried from the surface).	„ 7 „
3. Mamoak-omby.	Driving out the cattle (to be fed).	„ 8 „
4. Mitatao-haratra.	To come (the sun) above the purlin.	„ 9 „
5. Efa-bana-ny-andro.	The day is wide open.	„ 10 „
6. Vahavahana.	When the sun comes to the step.	„ 11 „
7. Mitatao-vovonana.	To come above the ridge, *i.e.* when the sun is vertical, just as at 9 o'clock it is at an angle of 45°, or square with the slope of the roof.	„ 12 „

Malagasy Term.	Meaning.	Hour of Day.
8. Mitsidik-andro.	The peeping in of the day; when the sun shines directly in at the door, as it begins to descend.	About 1 o'clock.
9. Ampitotoam-bary.	At the place of pounding rice; *i.e.* the rays reach farther into the building, and touch the part where the rice-mortar usually stands.	„ 2 „
10. Ampamatora-janak omby.	At the place of fastening the calf.	„ 3 „
11. Modi-ombi-tera-bao.	The return of the cow that has newly calved.	„ 4 „
12. Tafa-paka.	Touching (when the sun's rays reach the east wall).	„ 4½ „
13. Mananson-omby-antsaha.	To collect the cattle from the field.	„ 5 „
14. Mena-maso-andro.	The red sun.	„ 5½ „
15. Maty-maso-andro.	The dead sun; sunset.	„ 6 „
16. Manakom-bary-olona.	People cook their rice.	„ 7 „
17. Homam-bary-olona.	People eat their rice.	„ 8 „
18. Mipoa-tafondro.	Gunfire.	„ 9 „
19. Tapi-mandry-olona.	Finished; people lie down.	„ 10 „
20. Mamatou-alina.	Midnight.	„ 12 „
21. Maneno-sahona.	Frog-croaking.	„ 3 „
22. Maneno-akoho.	Cock-crowing.	„ 3½ „
23. Ahitan-tsoratr'omby, or Mazava-ratsy.	Seen the colour of the cattle, or Twilight.	„ 5½ „
24. Mifoho-olo-mazoto, or Mazava-atsinanana.	Diligent people awake, or, The east is light.	„ 5¾ „

The Malagasy divide the year into twelve months or moons, for the same word (*vòlana*) is used for both; but as these are lunar months of twenty-eight days each, with eighteen intercalary ones, their year is eleven days shorter than the real period of the earth's revolution round the sun. So that their New Year's Day falls in every one of

our months, but eleven days earlier each year, thus completing the cycle in thirty-three years; at the end of which time the festival is again held at the same season of the year.

The following are the names of the months, but of course, from the shortness of the year as compared with our own, they do not correspond with any fixed period:—

1. Alahamady.	5. Alahasaty.	9. Alakaozy.
2. Adaoro.	6. Asombola.	10. Adijady.
3. Adizaozy.	7. Adimizana.	11. Adalo.
4. Asorotany.	8. Alakarabo.	12. Alahotsy.

It will be seen that the Arabic article *al* is prefixed to several of them; and it appears tolerably certain that the words are all derived from the Arabs, who introduced them, together with some knowledge of astrology;—if, indeed, that can be called astrology which is a system of computing lucky and unlucky days by the various changes of the moon; for the stars are not made use of by the *mpskìdy* and *mpànàndro*, the "diviners" and "foretellers of days." Different names are used by the Bétsimisàraka and the Sàkalàvas; but it is a curious fact that the same words are applied on the eastern and western coasts to months at different seasons of the year.

The Malagasy have a somewhat elaborate system of discovering what are supposed to be favourable or unfortunate days in the various months. The opening portions of Asorotany and Alahasaty, for instance, are deemed so unlucky that children born at such times were to be put to death; so also at the commencement of Alakaozy, except the child's evil destiny should be overcome by a kind of ordeal, when it was suffered to live, as having conquered its *vìntana*, or fate. In other cases the evil influence of the

time might be averted by offering certain substitutes or propitiatory offerings called *fàditra*.*

The majority of houses in the country, as well as those outside the fosses of the capital and other towns, are made of clay—generally of the bright red earth which constitutes all the rising ground—but sometimes also of the blue and yellow ochre-tinted soils found in the level rice-fields. Although, in our own climate, we should think a house made of mud or earth a poor structure, yet, from the tenacity of the material and the hardness with which it sets, a clay house is really superior in durability and warmth to one made of timber. There are some very large clay houses, belonging to wealthy people, in the neighbourhood of Antanànarìvo; they are handsomely finished, and are very substantial and durable. The outer walls are plastered with a cement composed of sand, clay, and cowdung, and are very smooth and hard. Frequently they are tinted with various bright-coloured earths.

During the last few years, building with sun-dried brick has been introduced by Mr. James Cameron; the Mission Hospital, some of the native churches, and many large houses being constructed of this material. So evident are the advantages of this kind of walling, with regard to economy of space and material, greater stability, and neatness of appearance, that it is being extensively adopted by the people for their dwellings.

For several years past, the oldfashioned style of Malagasy house, with high-pitched roof, crossed horns, and single door and window, has rarely been built. Good modern houses, whether of wood or clay, are generally made larger than was formerly the custom—with roofs of much lower pitch, hipped or sloping at all four sides, and with a

* See chapter xiii.

verandah surrounding the building. Windows and doors are put all round the house, the doors often having glass in the upper half, and the windows being sometimes glazed, but always having venetian shutters. One or two lightning-conductors generally rise from the ridge, and the crossed horns are no longer seen. The interior is usually divided into three chambers, the centre being the largest and used as a living room, the end ones as sleeping apartments. Many are papered with French wall-papers, chiefly of battle or hunting scenes, and frequently the floors are laid with parquetry of various hardwoods, beautifully arranged as to colour and pattern. The Malagasy are skilful in this kind of work, and the palaces and large houses are handsomely finished in their floors and ceilings. In one or two houses a curious kind of decoration may be observed, made by fixing small looking-glasses in lines and circles in the mouldings of the ceilings and walls. These have an odd effect, but are not altogether unpleasing. The central room, which is generally lofty, often has a light gallery running round it, and giving access to the upper rooms at each end. Some large houses are roofed with wooden shingles, others with clay tiles, and others with corrugated or sheet-iron. A law has lately been made (June 17, 1868) that all buildings within the city are to be covered with incombustible materials.

A form of house resembling those built at Mauritius and the Cape, somewhat like the letter H in plan, has recently been introduced for the mission residences, and has been extensively copied by the natives—for, notwithstanding their conservative habits, the Malagasy are not slow to recognise the value of any improvement suggested by Europeans. In these residences, fireplaces and chimneys have been constructed, for the evenings are sufficiently

cold in June, July, and August to make a wood-fire a very pleasant addition to one's comfort; while it is an advantage to be able to dry the house and its contents during the warm but moist weather of the rainy season.

Owing to the fact that almost all houses in the central provinces of the island are built with the length running north and south, or nearly so, the people use the points of the compass in describing the position of things in cases where we should say *right* or *left*, *behind* or *before*. Thus, in directing a Malagasy servant to look for an article in a closet, or to arrange dishes, knives and forks, etc., on a table, one would say, "Look for" or "Place the things" north, south, east, or west, as the case might be. In riding in a palanquin the bearers will generally direct each other in this way, rather than by saying "To the right," or "To the left." The most absurd instance of this use of words I know was told me by one of my friends. He was dining with a Malagasy family, members of his congregation, and when eating some curry-and-rice, a small portion adhered to his moustache. His host told him of the circumstance, and when my friend wiped the wrong side of his mouth, he was corrected by his entertainer saying, "No—no, it's on the *southern* side of your moustache."

Except in the case of the very poorest people, a Malagasy family has generally two or three houses in its inclosure, or *tòkotàny*, and often half-a-dozen or more; for married sons frequently reside close to their parents, and some houses are appropriated to the slaves, others are used as kitchens, etc. The whole is generally surrounded by a wall of clay. Where the houses are near a public road, steps are made close to the gate or at an angle of the wall, leading up to a little square platform or lookout, called the *fijerèna*. Here the people are very fond of sitting

when the business of the day is over, to watch the passers-by and observe whatever may be going on in the street. We can hardly pass one of these fijerènas many times, especially in the more frequented roads of Antanànarìvo, without hearing a specimen of native politeness in the matter of salutations. The Malagasy are a most courteous people, and even the poorest have often a natural dignity and ease of manner not at all common amongst Englishmen. If an acquaintance is seen squatting on his lookout as we pass by, or if it is a person of known position or rank, though not a friend, it would be rude to proceed without saying, *Mbay làlana, tòmpoko é, i.e.* "Allow me to pass, sir;" to which he responds by a gracious *Andèha, tòmpoko é*—"Pray proceed, sir." Then generally follow, "How are you?—How do you do?—How is it with you?" in a number of variations unknown to Western speech; until at last, as the passer-by gets out of hearing, the final *Vélòma*, farewell, literally, "may you live," and *traràntiravo*, "reach old age," complete the series of complimentary speeches interchanged.

When newly arrived in the country, I used to be often quite embarrassed by the succession of inquiries made, even after I imagined all the opening remarks of the conversation were completed. It was only after some time I gradually perceived that it is a polite attention to continue repeating these questions after one's health and general wellbeing. If a servant, or indeed any person wishing to show respect, passes near to one when sitting in the house, or in front of you out-of-doors, he bends down, and with the hand nearly touching the ground, says, "Allow me to pass," or, "Excuse me, sir" (*Aza fàdy àho*). The salutation to Andrians, or members of the royal tribes, differs from that addressed to ordinary Hovas. The usual

inquiries are preceded by, *Tsàra và, tòmpoko é?*—literally, "Is it well, sir?" and they reply, *Tsàra hiàny*, "Well indeed." All speeches, proclamations, and messages to or from the sovereign or the great people are both prefaced and liberally interspersed with a number of set complimentary phrases; and respect to a superior is shown by lengthening or drawling out the final syllables of the sentences.

The Malagasy are generally temperate in their habits, and they do not indulge in a great variety of food. Rice is the staple article of diet, and forms the bulk of every meal. The people do not usually eat more than twice a day—in the forenoon and soon after sunset. The poorer classes often have no meat with their rice, but certain herbs, and the leaves of the màngahàzo are generally boiled with it and eaten as a vegetable. Sometimes they have to content themselves with the manioc-root, which is nutritious but insipid. Usually, however, a little meat of some kind is either roasted or cooked together with the rice. They are fond of soups, stews, and meats with gravy, so that the rice may be well moistened. Beef is both cheap and good, as also are all kinds of poultry. The mutton is poor and lean, the native sheep being a hairy rather than a woolly animal, and much more like a goat than an English Southdown. They have large heavy tails, which are considered a delicacy by the people, but hardly so by Europeans, as they consist chiefly of fat. At all funerals, feasts, and rejoicings, the killing of bullocks and eating of beef form an indispensable part of the proceedings. Fresh-water shrimps and crayfish are used, but fish is not very plentiful. A fish called the *tròndro* is the best, somewhat resembling a haddock in flavour. Eels are caught in the rivers, and large quantities of gold and silver fish are found in the small canals in the rice-fields; but they are no

dainties, being too muddy in taste. Vegetables and fruit are abundant; and the poor people eat the smaller variety of locust. These are caught by hand, and are roasted, after winnowing away the legs and wings.

Rice is generally kept in the husk until required for each meal, and the pounding and preparing it for cooking

SLAVE-GIRLS POUNDING RICE.

is part of the daily work of the female slaves. A large wooden mortar is used for the purpose, about a foot and a half high, with a flat square ledge round the top. The husk is removed by beating the rice with a wooden pestle; and generally two and often three slave-girls pound at one mortar, alternating their strokes in regular succession.

After being thoroughly cleansed, the rice is winnowed by shaking it in a large flat wooden dish; it is then washed repeatedly in cold water, cooked in a globular earthen pot, and served in dishes of coarse glazed native pottery. A spoon is stuck into each portion of rice, and the meat-gravy is either poured over it, or set in another dish, so that each spoonful of rice may be dipped into the liquid. Knives and forks are little used by the lower classes, and the fingers serve to pull the meat to pieces. Strips of the broad leaves of the banana-tree are frequently used as substitutes for, and in addition to, plates and dishes. A common measure of time is that occupied in cooking a panful of rice, about half an hour, more or less; and places are said to be distant one, two, or more *màsa-bàry*, or "rice-cookings." Water is the chief beverage of the people, but a kind of poor coffee is made by boiling water in the rice-pot, to the sides of which the half-roasted or burnt grains of rice adhere after cooking. A taste for tea and coffee is spreading amongst the Malagasy, and coffee of very fair quality is grown in the neighbourhood of Antanànarìvo; but it seems to flourish best at a lower elevation, and will probably become an important article of export at some future day. A coarse spirit distilled from sugarcane is largely made, and a good deal of cheap claret and vermouth is imported; but the Hovas are not addicted to drunkenness, and intoxicated persons are rarely seen, in public at least. After a meal, the Malagasy rinse the mouth with cold water, and to this sensible habit they probably owe the generally excellent and white state of their teeth. They consider Europeans greatly wanting in cleanliness for neglecting this practice.

It is rather remarkable that tobacco-smoking is not practised in Madagascar, except by a few natives who have acquired the habit from Europeans. Tobacco grows

wild, and cigars are made by persons who have been taught by the French; but the "noxious weed" is almost universally used in the form of snuff. The leaves are dried and pounded, and then mixed with certain other ingredients,—a small quantity of salt, the ashes of some sweet-scented plants, etc.; the snuff is not applied to the nostrils, but put into the mouth. Almost every Malagasy carries a snuffbox, which is stuck into the girdle. This box is part of a reed, of various sizes, from three or four inches to a foot long, and from half an inch to an inch in diameter. The exterior is beautifully polished, and is often ornamented with patterns burnt in with a needle; the end is closed by a stopper, to which a tassel is attached. A small portion of snuff is poured into the hand and then tossed into the mouth by a most dexterous jerk, so as to deposit the mixture between the lower lip and the gums. Smoking *rongòna*, or hemp-seed, is occasionally practised; its use is, however, illegal. Its effects are highly deleterious, for a time almost maddening, and are sometimes attended by fatal results.

THE RICE-PLANT.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOCIAL CUSTOMS OF THE MALAGASY—CONTINUED.

Dress—Of men and women—Gracefulness of native lamba—Spinning and weaving by women—Different kinds of cloth made—Children unclothed when young—Practice of marking the body with scars—Uncleanliness—Beds—Occupations of the people—Dexterity in various handicrafts—Absence of the carver's art — Skill in metal-working—Curious bellows—Pottery—Repression of inventive power by compulsory government service — Native traders — Monetary system — Use of foreign coin—Money weighed—Bargaining—Amusements—"Kicking blue"—Dancing—Singing—Music—Valìha—Lokànga—Disuse of native songs — Character of these — Song in praise of the sovereign—Circumcision—Its non-religious character—The "Covenant of Blood"—Slavery—Its mild character—Used as a punishment for crime.

THE dress of the Malagasy is very simple. The general warmth of the climate makes a European style of clothing, with its tight and close fit, very unsuitable; and the native dress is scanty, loose, and flowing. The ordinary dress of the men of the poorer class consists of a long piece of cloth round the loins, called the *salàka,* sometimes a coarse jacket of hemp or ròfia cloth, and always a lamba of these or some other cheap material. If in the army or government service, a straw hat is worn; but in the case of a *bòrizàny,* or civilian, no head-covering is allowed; and the hair is kept long, and plaited in a number of knots all over the head, very much in the same way as the women wear their hair. Even the judges go without the straw hat, and have their hair plaited. The military class have the hair cut short, much in the same manner as English soldiers. Shoes and stockings are not much worn except by the

higher and more wealthy people; and even they frequently go without them, preferring the freedom of an unconfined foot. Those above the lowest class generally wear a shirt, in addition to the above-named dress; and sometimes trousers of calico or printed stuff, and a lamba of fine calico. This is occasionally edged with a border of five stripes of

BÉTSIMISÀRAKA. BÉZÀNOZÀNO. HOVAS.

coloured cloth, called the *akòtso*—a distinction which seems to be confined to the Hova tribes. These stripes are generally of two complementary colours, the centre one differing from the rest.

Women of the poorer class wear a long piece of cloth

round the waist and reaching to their heels—sometimes a tight-fitting jacket—and over this the invariable lamba. All, except the very poor, wear, in addition, a long dress of light print of a small neat pattern. Malagasy women do not wear a bonnet, or any protection for the head; nor do they seem to feel the need of anything of the sort, except that in the hottest part of the year they occasionally carry a parasol or sunshade. Their long black hair is generally plaited in a great number of knots arranged regularly over the head, and anointed with castor-oil, scented with the leaves of certain aromatic plants. Sometimes the hair is allowed to hang in a great number of little tails; at other times it is arranged in some of the various fashions known in Europe. The Bétsimisàraka women often wear a very broad-brimmed straw hat, but this is very seldom seen in Imérina.

On special occasions both sexes are fond of arraying themselves in European dress, but it seldom suits them well; and although the materials are often expensive, the want of judgment in arranging them sometimes makes the effect of the whole absurd, especially in the case of the men. The most becoming costume is that mixture of English and native dress usually worn, and just described. The long flowing lamba folded round the body, and one end thrown over the shoulder, is always graceful; and even children fold their little robes about them with an ease and dignity impossible to a European if he attempts to wear this national garment. There are several slight differences in the way of wearing the lamba; in walking, both arms are covered, and in cold weather it is brought over the mouth and nostrils. In speaking or preaching, one arm is generally left free, and when working, the lamba is bound round the waist, a literal "girding the loins." The lamba is worn by both

men and women, but somewhat differently arranged. It is usually about eight feet long by six feet wide.

The Malagasy are not averse to ornamenting their persons; and the native jewellers make silver chains of a surprising fineness, as well as bracelets, earrings, and charms, consisting of small silver ornaments which are worn on the wrist. Beads of coloured glass are extensively used by the poorer classes; but ornaments of red coral are the favourite adornment of the wealthier people.

Almost all Malagasy women, from the queen downwards, can spin and weave. They make cloth of hemp, ròfia and banana fibre, cotton and silk, and are very expert in producing both strong and neat fabrics. The silk lambas especially are very beautiful specimens of design; and there is an instinctive feeling for harmony of colour which makes them very effective. The patterns are generally arranged in stripes, with flowers and leaves worked in various colours, and with still more elaborate borders. They are sometimes worth from eighty to a hundred dollars. A very elegant lamba, called *àrindràno*, is made, with the body of white cotton, woven like a fine twill, with narrow stripes of black and colour, and broad borders of black silk with a pattern in coloured silk in the centre. These are worth from five to fifteen dollars. The *làmba-mèna* is another kind, with the body of dark red silk, and with stripes and borders of lighter colours. These are worn chiefly at the national festivals, marriages, and other occasions of public rejoicing; and they are also used for wrapping the dead.

Another kind of lamba is also manufactured of cotton, generally stained a dark red, with borders of dull green-and-blue stripes, but elaborately ornamented with patterns in small beads made of a mixture of silver and some inferior metal. These are very skilfully woven into the cloth, so

as to show on both sides, and have often a very elegant effect. The salàka or loin-cloth is often similarly made, the ends hanging down in front, and with a graceful arrangement of beads in a variety of patterns.

The materials of these cloths are spun as well as woven by hand. The spindles are made of bone and tree-fern-bark, no wheel being used. The women will sometimes unravel English calico to get fine and regular yarn for weaving up again in their own way. Very neat cloths are made both from ròfia and banana fibre, and resemble, in colour, very fine and stout brown-holland. From this universal accomplishment of the female sex, an old Malagasy name for girl is *zàza-ampèla*, "the child of the spindle," or spinning child—nearly analogous to our word "spinster."

It is remarkable that the Malagasy make hardly any use of the skins of animals for articles of dress, but chiefly use vegetable fibre, woven or beaten out. In some parts of the country a cloth is made by the women from the bark of a species of *hibiscus*, beaten out and prepared, much in the same way as is done by many of the South Sea islanders. These circumstances are very fairly considered as additional arguments for the non-African origin of the people. It is well known how large a use is made of skins by the various tribes inhabiting the neighbouring continent, while the art of weaving cloth from vegetable fibres is a marked peculiarity of the Malayo-Polynesian races.

Children of the poorer class seldom wear much clothing until they are five or six years old. To anyone newly arrived in the country there is often a ludicrous effect in the perfect freedom from restraint which they exhibit. I remember especially being amused with this one Sunday, when taking part in a service at one of the smaller chapels in the capital. During the reading of the Scriptures, a

little fellow of two or three years old, perfectly naked, came in at that side of the building where the women were sitting on the floor. After standing and looking about him for a few moments without the slightest embarrassment, his mother caught sight of him, and rolling up a little lamba tossed it over the heads of those sitting near to her. The child picked up his tiny robe and folded it round him with inimitable dignity and ease of manner, and then marched to his place, without anyone but myself taking special notice of the incident.

The Malagasy have but little beard or whiskers, and in many cases the hair on the face is plucked out with small tweezers. If this is not done it is cut short or closely shaven, and a beard of any length is rarely seen. The practice of tattooing seems unknown in Madagascar,* but many amongst the lowest class of slaves are marked by scars on the face and other parts of the body, resembling those seen in some of the aboriginal tribes of Australia. These appear to be produced by making incisions in the skin, the wounds being afterwards cauterised. The marks are most common on the forehead, and are frequently seen in slaves of African origin.

Cleanliness is not so highly esteemed by the Malagasy as might be desired, either in the houses or their persons. The use of the bath is not so common in Madagascar as it generally is in tropical countries; and in the poorer houses, their custom of covering over the dirty floor-mats by spreading a cleaner one, instead of removing the old one, affords a

* Since writing the above, however, I find that the Rev. Mr. Campbell, of the Church Missionary Society, has observed the practice amongst some of the Bétsilèo tribes. He says of the women: "Their arms were tattooed all over, some of them having also a kind of open-work collar tattooed round their necks. The breasts of the men were ornamented after the same fashion."

hiding-place for fleas to an extent which would be unbearable to a European. Clothes are washed in the streams or pools in the rice-grounds, or beaten upon flat smooth stones at the water's edge. A dark unpleasant-looking soap is manufactured in the country, and the flour of the manioc-root makes an excellent starch, and as they have box smoothing-irons, linen can be "got up" very passably in English fashion. In Antanànarìvo, the scarcity of water in the upper part of the city partly accounts for the small use made of it for the purpose of cleanliness, but this reason can hardly stand good in other places where the springs are at no great distance from the houses.

A Malagasy does not think a separate room at all indispensable for a sleeping apartment; nor is a bed, in our sense of the word, an absolute requisite for his comfort. With a thin mat of straw he lies down contentedly on a hard floor; the same clothes that are worn by day are slept in by night,* and the lamba is drawn closely over the head and face. The people live a good deal in the open air by day, and seem to enjoy fresh air and ventilation; but they do not care how closely they are shut up when asleep, and prefer a dense impure atmosphere which would be most repulsive to an Englishman. In the better class of dwellings, the northern room of the house is generally set apart as a sleeping-place; and handsome bedsteads, turned from dark wood, and hung with neat muslin curtains, are frequently seen. Europeans usually find a mosquito-curtain a very desirable addition to the comfort of a bedroom, especially during the rainy season, when the moist and warm air favours the production of these insect plagues. Scorpions and centipedes are occasionally found in the houses, but neither these nor snakes are so common

* Exodus xxii. 26, 27.

or so venomous as in most other tropical countries. Centipedes, however, inflict very painful wounds, and cause intense agony for several hours; but I never heard of their bite, nor that of scorpions or serpents, being fatal.

The question has frequently been put to me,—What are the occupations of the Malagasy, and how do people obtain their livelihood? In reply, it may be said that it is somewhat difficult, even for those who have spent a considerable time in the country, to understand whence many classes derive their means of existence. There is but little of that minute subdivision of labour which obtains in highly civilised countries; and in many of the occupations which are in daily requisition, almost everyone can take his part if necessary, often doing the work entirely himself. Thus, in agriculture, everyone sees personally after his own rice-grounds, and can turn his hand to each of the various operations necessary in preparing the land, sowing, transplanting, reaping, threshing, and storing the grain. In building a house, a good deal of the work is done by the owner or his servants; and, as already mentioned, every woman is more or less able to spin and weave cloth for household use. There is this difference also between the people of Madagascar and those of most European states—viz., that the country is so sparsely populated that the land is, comparatively, of little value, so that almost everyone possesses some piece of ground which he can cultivate; even the slaves have their rice-patch. There is very little of that abject grinding poverty so common in the crowded populations of European cities. Except in the near vicinity of Malagasy towns, a good deal of the land appears open to anyone living in the neighbourhood to cultivate and inclose at pleasure, so that no one need want at least the bare necessaries of life.

But although the sharp divisions of trades and professions do not exist nearly to the same extent in Madagascar as in Europe, there are nevertheless many who live chiefly by following special occupations. Carpenters, blacksmiths, masons, tinsmiths, cabinetmakers, silversmiths, thatchers, and others, often obtain their living principally by following these callings. There are also certain classes of people, as the charcoal-burners and wood-fellers, who are really serfs to the government, and may not leave their employment without express permission. The common soldiers also are almost as much slaves to their rulers as those just named.

The Malagasy are by no means devoid of skill in many occupations requiring delicacy and dexterity of hand. Their long taper fingers seem well adapted for work requiring skilful manipulation, and although they do not execute the marvellously minute carving in wood and ivory in which Chinese and Hindoo workmen excel, yet in certain kinds of work they show many proofs of similar ability and taste. In weaving cloths of silk and cotton they exhibit, as already mentioned, a sort of instinct for graceful arrangement both of form and colour. In making exceedingly fine silver chains, and filigree-work of gold and silver wire, the native jewellers attain a high degree of excellence. They also possess not a little of the imitative faculty of the Chinese. In the palace are several large and handsome silver vases of classic design copied from one sent from France, and it is difficult to detect that they are not of European manufacture. In straw basket-work the dexterity of the people is equally apparent. A great variety of baskets of various sizes are manufactured for holding rice, cotton, silk, and other articles; but a small kind of box made of very fine straw is the most wonderful example

of manual skill. Some of these are about an inch cube in dimensions, but are woven of a material almost as delicate as the finest cotton or silk, and finished inside and out with marvellous neatness. They have a cover of the same minute workmanship, and are generally lined with a coarser kind of straw-plait. Spoons are made of horn in a variety of shapes, some exactly resembling those of English manufacture. Wooden ladles of large size are also made for serving rice.

In one respect the Malagasy differ remarkably from all the Malayo-Polynesian tribes, which they so much resemble in other points, and that is, in the almost utter absence amongst them of the carver's or sculptor's art. Nearly every island in the Pacific and in the Malay Archipelago has its special type of ornamentation. Houses, canoes, paddles, clubs, and implements of all kinds, are carved with minute and elaborate ornament, or, as in the case of the New Zealanders, with bold flowing curves and imitations of the human figure; but all this seems to be entirely absent in the Malagasy. The idols even, as will be seen farther on, are not imitations of human or animal forms, except that a very rude figure of a bullock in silver is worn as an amulet or charm in some cases. The walls and ceilings of apartments in the royal palaces are painted in patterns, having somewhat of a Chinese type, but no figures are introduced. The only attempt at portraiture I have seen are two paintings, in the Silver House, of Malagasy princes, but exceedingly hard and wooden in execution; and in a large country-house belonging to the present secretary of state is a continuous line of figures around the walls, in the gallery of the chief room. These paintings represent a variety of characters and classes — military, judicial, agricultural, etc.; they are about a foot or a

little more in height, and are very rude in drawing and colouring.

The Malagasy are skilful workers in metal, and their ironwork is of excellent quality as respects strength and toughness. Iron is extremely plentiful in some parts of the country, being found with a very small percentage of earthy matter. In some hills it forms so large a proportion of the soil as to deflect a compass very seriously, and often to prevent a correct observation being taken. It is smelted by being broken into lumps of convenient size, which are then arranged with alternate layers of charcoal in a hollow in the ground. A dome-shaped covering of stone and clay is built over these, and fire is applied, the blast being kept up by a pair of bellows, until the whole is brought into a white heat, and the metal runs into a mass at the bottom of the furnace. It is then broken up and still further purified, and run into pigs of convenient size for working into any article required. The native bellows resemble in principle those used by the New Zealanders and other Polynesian tribes. They consist of two upright cylinders, about a foot in diameter, formed from the trunk of a tree. Each is fitted with a piston, packed with coarse cloth, and having valves of the same material. An old musket-barrel fixed in the base of each cylinder conducts the air to the furnace, and by working the pistons alternately a continuous draught is easily kept up.

The samo kind of bellows are also used by the blacksmiths in their work, a square lump of iron forming the anvil. There is hardly anything in the shape of wrought-iron work that they cannot execute, if provided with a model or pattern. During the building of the memorial churches, native wrought-iron work was used for the finials, ornamental hinges, railings, and other fittings of

the building: these were admirably made, and finished with as much neatness as could have been obtained in an English workshop. In copper and brass work they are not less skilful. The lightning-conductors for the churches, and also for the new palace,—the former being wire and rod, and the latter, plate conductors,—were all executed by the native smiths. The common bolts, hinges, locks, knives, and other articles sold in the markets, are rough-looking and unfinished; but it is not because better work cannot be produced, but because a cheap article is required by the majority of the people. Some files recently brought to England were pronounced, by a friend well acquainted with Sheffield manufactures, to be of extremely good workmanship and most creditably finished.

In the making of pottery, the people are not so skilful as in some other handicrafts. The earthenware is of a dark-reddish colour, and not very strong. The chief articles produced are the water-jars, or *sinys*. These are globular in shape; some are used for carrying on the head, and others, of much larger size, for holding a store of water for household use. Some kinds of dishes and plates are glazed with blacklead, and a rather elegantly-shaped vessel, made for cooking rice at the *fandròana*, is often ornamented with zigzag ornaments and bands, resembling the patterns on ancient Roman and British pottery. Flooring and roofing tiles have recently been manufactured for the memorial churches and some of the larger houses.

There can be little doubt that were encouragement given to intelligent natives, great advances would soon be made. In the Silver Palace is a clock which was made by a native mechanic, and, within the last few months, harmoniums have been manufactured by Malagasy workmen. There can hardly, however, be much improvement, unless a new system is introduced instead of the present *fanòm-*

pòana, or compulsory service, due to the government in lieu of taxes. This of course tends to repress instead of encouraging ingenuity on the part of the mechanical and working classes. The more clever a man is, the greater demand there will be for his unrequited services, both by the government and his own immediate feudal superior; so that any ability or inventive power he may possess he will naturally conceal, lest he should be called upon for a more than usual amount of labour.

Before leaving the subject of the employments of the people, it may be remarked that there are many native traders who are continually going to and from the seaports to purchase European goods, which find a ready sale at Antanànarìvo. Hardware, crockery, cotton prints, calicoes, flannels, and blankets, are all sold at a good profit. Strange to say, there is no European trader resident at the capital, although there are a number on the coast. This probably arises to some extent from the difficulty and expense of carriage, and the monopoly which the government and certain high officers practically hold; still it is difficult to believe that a firm with one of their number resident at Antanànarìvo to sell goods, and another at Tamatave or some other seaport, would not find it a very profitable undertaking. The growth of many articles of native produce—as coffee, indigo, cotton, sugar, rice, and spices—might be developed, and the country largely benefited. Much of this, however, must wait until a thorough confidence is established, and the government see it to be to their interest, as well as for the advantage of the country, to pursue a more liberal policy towards European settlers and traders.

The monetary system of the Malagasy is rude and primitive, and shows less advance than do many of their social usages. They have no national coinage, and all the

money in circulation is foreign. The standard coin is the Spanish dollar, by which all amounts are reckoned. The pillar dollar, once almost a world-wide currency, was until very recently, the most used and valued; but within the last few years, French five-franc pieces, which are almost equivalent in value, have been preferred. But almost any silver coin of similar size and weight would be taken; and in paying wages I have frequently been interested with the large variety of European and American money brought together. One might sometimes trace modern French history by the five-franc pieces: from the time of the old monarchy, through the republic, consulate, and emperorship of Napoleon I.; then the restored kingdom under Louis XVIII., Charles X., and Louis Philippe; and again the shortlived "*liberté, egalité, fraternité*" of another republic, resulting, as before, in the dictatorship and imperial rule of a Napoleon. Sardinian, Belgian, Austrian, and Italian coins are often met with, and great numbers of Mexican, Bolivian, Peruvian, and other South American dollars, as well as a few of those of the United States.

But the strangest part of the business is, that all sums below a dollar in value, are obtained by cutting up the coin into pieces of all shapes and sizes, and weighing it by means of neat little scales and weights, which every one carries about with him. Buying and selling is therefore a very tedious process, at least to Europeans; although the Malagasy, like all Easterns, enjoy nothing better than to watch others engaged in making a bargain, and at the same time to join in the discussion, and offer their own opinions. The higher relative value of money may be seen by the minute fractions into which a dollar is divided. In each dollar there are eight *sikàjy* (about sixpence), each sikàjy is divided into nine *èranambàtra*, and each èranambàtra into ten *vàry-vènty*, or the weight of a plump grain

of rice; so that a dollar is divided into 720 parts. Yet even these, as it might seem to us, inappreciably small sums will purchase a certain quantity of some kinds of food; but as field labour is paid for at the rate of from twopence to fourpence a day, and skilled artisans receive only from fourpence to eightpence a day, the relation between the price of provisions and the scale of wages is not very disproportionate. The necessaries of life, however, are certainly more easily procured by the very poor in Madagascar than in England.

Four weights marked with a government stamp are used in weighing money: the *lòso*, or half-dollar; the *kiròbo*, quarter-dollar or shilling; *sikàjy*, or sixpence; and *ròa-voamèna*, equal to fourpence. Other amounts are obtained by varying these in the opposite scales and adding grains of rice.

During the short reign of Radàma II., which at first promised so much for the material advance of the country, it was intended to form a national coinage; and a beautiful profile was taken of the king's head by Mr. Ellis for the dies. Like many other projects, this was abandoned at his death; but it is probable that the intention will soon be resumed, now that the country is opened up to European enterprise, and commercial treaties are concluded with England, France, and the United States.

The relative value of money and labour has been considerably altered since the death of Rànavàlona I. The large amounts spent in the capital in the building of the memorial churches, the residences, school-houses, and other buildings belonging both to the Protestant and Roman Catholic missions, have raised wages and the price of many articles of food.

Bargaining is a lengthy process in Madagascar, and affords ample room for a display of native shrewdness and cunning. The seller asks at least double of what he is will-

ing to take, the buyer offers far less than he is prepared to give, and it is only after a great deal of fencing and manœuvring that they approximate and finally conclude the agreement, which is fitly termed *àdy vàrotra*, "a fought or contested sale."

The amusements of the Malagasy are not very numerous nor varied in character. In former times, hunting the wild cattle and hogs found in the unpopulated parts of the island was a favourite pastime of the chiefs, and during the reign of Radàma I. expeditions of this kind were conducted on an immense scale, and many thousand head of game slaughtered. Such sports do not seem to have been much practised of late years. In the time of Rànavàlona I. bullfighting was a frequent amusement of the queen, the spectacle generally taking place in the royal courtyard. Robert Drury describes the mode of hunting wild cattle while he was a prisoner in the country, from which it appears that the animals, which are of the humpless species, were usually killed at night, various stratagems being adopted to get close without being perceived by the cattle. In pursuing the wild hog, dogs were employed, and the amusement was often attended with risk, owing to the strength and ferocity of the animals. Drury also describes a method of killing crocodiles, in a part of the country where the dread of offending the reptile seemed less powerful than it is in Imérina and the Bètsileo districts.

The national and most characteristic Malagasy game is what is called *mamély-dia-mànga*, *i.e.* "striking blue with the sole" (of the foot). Boys and young men are exceedingly fond of this sport, and (especially on moonlight evenings) are often engaged at it in the chief roads of the city until gunfire. It consists in kicking an antagonist violently with the sole of the foot, the leg being lifted and

struck out, much in the same way that a horse or ass would kick. Severe bruises and hurts are often inflicted, and limbs and ribs are not unfrequently broken. The players often form in two lines, and taking hold of each other's hands rush forward, endeavouring to overthrow the opposite side and maintain their own position.

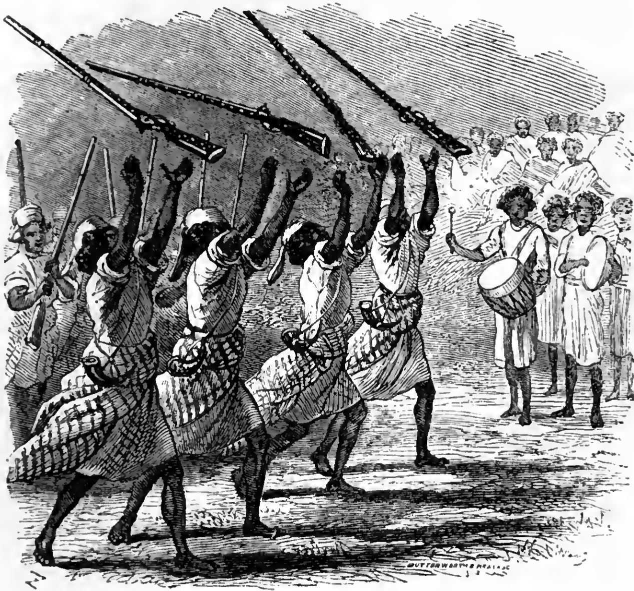
Malagasy children are very fond of a game which consists in throwing up several pebbles, receiving them alternately on the back and the palm of the hands, without dropping, for a number of times. Kites are used to some extent, and battledore and shuttlecock, together with other English amusements, have been introduced of late years. Games with a ball, either for throwing or kicking, are also much appreciated. A kind of game resembling draughts is a very common pastime, and is played with pebbles or beans on a board or piece of smooth stone or earth, having thirty-two divisions or holes, much in the same way as the game of fox-and-geese.

Within the last half-dozen years, since the introduction of rifles and breechloading guns, the young officers have been accustomed to meet together for trials of skill with these weapons. A sheep is usually set up as a target at a few hundred yards' distance, and many of the officers are very fair shots.

The Malagasy have a kind of dance, but it consists more in posturing and movements of the hands and arms than of the feet. Both sexes join in the amusement, but they do not dance together as in the European waltz or polka. The late Queen Ràsohèrina was very fond of this amusement, and a large number of people were obliged to attend and perform at the public entertainments at the palace, which were generally held on the Thursday afternoon. On the day following the coronation of the present sovereign the

greater part of the population of the capital repaired in the afternoon to Imàhamàsina to dance before the queen.*

The Sàkalàvas have a peculiar and picturesque dance, in which parties of men represent the various movements assumed in war. Thus, the attack, the conflict, the pur-



THE SÀKALÀVA WAR-DANCE.

suit, the rejoicing after victory, etc., are all shown by a kind of acting. Their guns, which are long, and studded with brass-headed nails, are repeatedly thrown up in the air and caught again in one hand, while a handkerchief or scarf is waved in the other. The whole performance has

* See chapter xi.

a grave and measured character, far removed from the war-dance of barbarous or semicivilised peoples. This dance was frequently exhibited before Queen Ràsohèrina at the palace, together with others peculiar to the Hovas.

Singing, and the playing of the few native musical instruments, form an important part of the amusements of the people. They may indeed be called a musical people, for, unlike many nations of Eastern origin, they have generally a correct ear, and can appreciate and learn with ease European melodies. Many of the people can, with great readiness, read musical notes and form good harmonies to the airs of simple tunes. The chief native instrument, the *valìha*, has already been described (p. 81). Although so simple in construction, I have often been charmed by the taste and skill with which some of the people will extemporise upon it, introducing airs from European music as well as their own plaintive style of melodies. Besides the valìha, a rude instrument, called the *lokànga*, is much used by the slaves. It is generally made of a piece of ebony or other hard wood, having two or three strings strung tightly so as to curve the wood, which has a hollow gourd or calabash attached to one end. As may be supposed, the sounds are poor and monotonous enough. A kind of flute and various forms of the drum complete the orchestra of native musical instruments. The drum is used to keep time, and the music has generally an accompaniment of clapping of hands.

The voices of the people appear somewhat harsh and nasal to a European ear; but there are a fair proportion of them who can, with a little instruction, sing in a very creditable manner. Probably their defects in want of depth and fulness are rather owing to the style of singing formerly practised, than to any inherent deficiency, especially as the children sing with as much sweetness as do

English boys and girls. They certainly can learn tunes with rapidity, and observe the proper parts suited for different voices. The people are very fond of singing in their houses in the evening when seated round the fire, before and after the meal of rice is served; but owing to the influence of Christianity in the capital and its neighbourhood, the native songs are far less frequently heard now than the tunes of hymns, which they learn at the religious services in the churches. It is only at the national festivals that the oldfashioned style of music is now heard; one must go away into the heathen districts to see what are the true native customs in this as in many other respects.

Violins, accordions, and other European instruments, as well as those used by a brass-band, are common in the country, and can be played with ease and correctness by a great many of the people. There is only one piano in the capital, and that belongs to the queen; but there are several harmoniums, some of which, as just mentioned, have been made by native workmen.

The earlier Protestant missionaries had much better opportunities of judging of the character of the national songs than foreigners residing chiefly at the capital can now have,—the combined influence of Christianity and European customs having greatly tended to bring them into disuse. I therefore quote here the opinion of one who was living at Antanànarìvo about forty years ago: "The songs are principally composed of detached sentences. They are highly figurative, but not so highly sentimental. In general they may rather be characterised as tame and insipid, the Malagasy language being itself too deficient in descriptive epithets, in adverbs and adjectives of quality, to admit of any fulness, richness, or luxuriance in their songs. Their festive songs are neither rhyme nor blank

verse, yet they are not destitute of a sort of cadence, partly arising from the number of syllables admitted, and partly from the emphasis laid on corresponding stanzas. The characteristic feature of most Malagasy singing in chorus, is alternate recitation. The subject of the song being usually its first line, which serves also for the name of the tune, is proposed in chorus, to which a leader replies, and so on alternately to the end of the piece, which contains from twenty to fifty or sixty lines. The following is a specimen of a song in praise of the sovereign:—

CHORUS. Rabòdo does not tread upon the ground (*i.e.* does not walk, but is carried).
LEADER. The Rabòdo of Àndraìm-Impòin-Imérina.
CHORUS. Rabòdo does not trample on the country! Long live the great life! (*i.e.* the sovereign).

"In a number of the country villages, where singing is much more practised than in the capital, the natives have obtained greater excellence; and it is thought that in some of the provinces of the south, the compositions, the singing, and the music are superior to those of the Hovas. Occasionally travelling bards may be met with, and there is reason to believe that some of the compositions sung by them contain more genuine poetry than any other specimens in the country."*

In Mr. Baker's "Outline of a Grammar of the Madagascar Language," the following specimen is given of a native song in praise of the queen, and is a good example of the metaphorical language and ideas of the people:—

Rabòdon-Andrianàmpoina,	Rabòdo (appellation of the queen), Andrianàmpoina (appellation of Radàma's father).
Atsimo n'Ambatonafandrana,	To the south is Ambatonafandrana (a village).

* "History of Madagascar," vol. i. pp. 274–5.

Avaratry ny Ambohimitsimbina,	To the north, Ambohimitsimbina,
Andrefany Ambohimiandrana,	To the west, Ambohimiandrana,
Atsinanana Ambohijanahary;	To the east, Ambohijanahary;
Veloma, Rabòdo!	Salutation, Rabòdo!
Sy Ramboasalama,	And Ramboasalama (her adopted son),
Sy Rakoto-sehenond-Radàma,	And Rakoto-sehenond-Radàma, (her son),
Sy ny havany tontolo,	With all the royal family,
Tsy tambo isaina.	Innumerable.
Ny tokotany dia farantsa,	Let her building-land be dollars,
Ny zoron'trano dia basy.	The corner-posts of her house, muskets.
Manambé, tsy'mba miavona,	Having much, she is not proud;
Rova lefona, ka temitr'olona indray,	Guarded by spears, she is fenced by men also,
Rabòdon-Andrianampoina!	Rabòdon-Andrianampoina!
Hazo tokana an'ony.	A single tree in a lake (art thou).
Tsy, firy no mandidy?	It cannot be said, How many rule?
Ka tomponay any ao!	For yonder is our sovereign!
Volantsinana ny avy andrefana;	The new moon coming from the west (is she);
Feno manana ny avy atsinanana,	The (full) moon possessing the east.
Ny hazo any Ambòhimànga,	(Like) the trees at Ambòhimànga,
Mijokajoka faniry.	Bending down in their growth,
Mitsinjo zaza manjaka;	(She) looks down upon the child that is to reign;
Manjaka any Rabòdo,	There Rabòdo (so) governs,
Ka ny kely manana ny azy,	That the inferior people possess their own,
Ny be manana ny azy.	The great ones possess theirs.
Ny tany ambaratonga,	The kingdom is a ladder (in regard to subordination),
Tsy mahatafintohina,	Which does not cause to stumble,
Tsy maha-sasa mandeha;	Nor fatigue those who ascend it.
Veloma, Rabòdon-Andrianàmpoina!	Salutation, Rabòdon-Andrianàmpoina!
Tsy manan'olonkala,	Having none that are hated (by thee),
Ny kamboty dia dongadonga,	The orphans are plump,
Ny velondray dia botrabotra.	They with living fathers are fat.

Amongst many other customs which show a link of connection with Asiatics is the practice of circumcision, which is observed by all the tribes inhabiting Madagascar. Some writers have imagined that it was introduced by the Arabs at a comparatively modern period, but there is no necessity for supposing it to be a foreign or modern importation, as the earliest accounts show it to have been in use when the island was first visited by Europeans. Besides this, it is well known that this custom is found amongst other branches of the Malayo-Polynesian race, and is practised by the Samoans and other Pacific islanders, far more distant from the Asiatic continent than are the Malagasy.

It might be thought that a notice of such a custom as circumcision should appear in connection with the religious observances of the people; but it is regarded more as a social and semi-political ceremony than as having any religious signification. The grand reason to the Malagasy for all such things would be, firstly, because they were done by their ancestors; while, if questioned more closely, they seem to regard it as an initiation into manhood, and as making youths fit for military and other government service.

No fixed period is observed, corresponding to the eighth day of the Jews, and boys are often several years old before receiving the rite. Application is made by the people of a district or province to the sovereign, and he fixes the time for the ceremony. No general circumcision has taken place in Imérina since the death of Rànavàlona in 1861, and probably not for some few years previous to that time;* so that our information as to the ceremonial observed is all derived from what is told by the people themselves, or related by the earlier missionaries.

* Since writing the above, I hear from my friends at Antanànarìvo, that the ceremony was observed in May last year (1869).

It appears that the time of circumcision is made an occasion of great rejoicing, and also that much profligacy and crime have often prevailed during the period of its observance, which usually continues for more than a month from first to last. Prominent amongst the ceremonies is the fetching of water, which in the first instance is called "holy water," and in a subsequent stage of the proceedings, "strong water." Amusements of all kinds are kept up for several days, and every available ornament in the way of clothes and jewellery is brought out to do honour to the occasion. At the time of performing the rite, benedictions and prayers for prosperity are pronounced on the children, and a public address delivered, exhorting them to be courageous and faithful to the sovereign; while in the case of slaves, they are counselled to be industrious and obedient to their masters. Both sheep and oxen are killed in a semi-sacrificial way, the blood being regarded as possessing some degree of sanctity. An offering of bananas is made to avert evil; these, having been first placed upon the children, are supposed to bear away the calamities dreaded, and are thrown away outside the village as devoted or accursed. Feasting, dancing, and singing follow, and a great deal of time and money is expended upon the whole ceremony.

Another Malagasy custom may be here referred to, that of the Covenant of Blood. This is an agreement entered into by two persons to aid and support each other in every circumstance of difficulty or adversity in which they may be placed. It is indeed a kind of Freemasonry, with this great difference—that it is a ceremony observed in public, and not secretly, and is generally confined to two persons, instead of being a bond of union between members of a widely-spread society. It appears to be a practice quite

unobjectionable, and has probably often been of great benefit, by strengthening the feelings of mutual dependence and assistance, and particularly in softening the hardships of slavery.

The covenant is made by a small portion of blood being drawn from the bosom, near the heart, and each party swallowing some of that taken from his friend. By this solemn act it is thought that each partakes to some extent of the very life of the other, and is henceforth one with him. A long form of oath is repeated, binding the covenanting parties to help each other at all needful times with property, exertion, and even life, if necessary, and imprecating fearful calamities upon their heads should the vow be broken.

It is well known that the Dyaks of Borneo have a similar custom, so that we have here another point of connection with the people of the south-east peninsula of Asia.

The subject of slavery in Madagascar may fitly conclude these notices of the social customs of the people. As far as can be ascertained from them, the practice of holding slaves appears to have existed from the earliest times. Slaves are derived from three or four different sources—viz., captives taken in war; persons condemned to slavery, generally together with their families, for crime or political offences; and people who are sold for debt, as well as the descendants of all these. There is much variety of colour and feature amongst the slaves, many evidently being of African origin, and are usually called Mozambiques; while others are derived from tribes in distant parts of the island, and are generally darker in colour than the inhabitants of Imérina; while others, again, are as fair in complexion as the lightest Hovas, and are the descendants of people who were formerly free and possibly of high

position. These are called *Zàza-Hova*, while slaves whose ancestors have always been in that condition are termed *Andèvo.* These two classes may not intermarry, nor can either of them take wives who are free women.

SLAVE-GIRLS DRAWING WATER.

Malagasy slavery does not seem to present those repulsive features seen in most countries where it is practised, nor does it often occasion cruelty and hardship. It has more of a patriarchal family character, and is much more truly a "domestic institution" than that so recently abolished in the Southern States of America. The older slave men and women are called the "fathers and mothers"

of the household; and it is amusing to hear how slaves are addressed as "friends" and "relatives," and are coaxed and flattered when work is required to be done. Instances of unkind treatment are comparatively rare, and the condition of the servile population is often far more comfortable than that of the poorer class of free people. They can accumulate property; from being of real money-value, they are often exempted from the punishment of death, to which freemen are liable; and in many respects their condition is really to be preferred to that of the common soldiery, who while nominally free are really serfs to the government. Still, the fact remains that they can be sold, and are the property of others, although it is a rare thing for them to be separated from the family in which they have been born, unless as a punishment for serious offences. To separate a slave mother from her children or a husband from his wife is a very unusual occurrence.

For many political offences the punishment is death to the offender, and the reduction of his wife and children to slavery. The Malagasy word for this is *màhavèry*, *i.e.* "to cause to be *lost*"—a significant expression. In such cases, however, they are generally redeemed by their relatives, in order to prevent disgrace coming upon the whole family through any of its members becoming slaves. At the same time, some who have been born in servitude hold positions of trust and confidence, and there seems little of that sharp line of separation between them and free people which one would have supposed, or any feeling of prejudice against them. In a few instances slaves are well educated, and associate on apparently equal terms of intimacy and friendship with sons of officers of high rank; others are preachers and church-officers, and are held in equal respect with tneir brethren who are freemen.

CHAPTER IX.

TOMBS AND FUNERAL RITES.

Notions of the soul and a future state—Malagasy psychology—Ghosts—Fable teaching future retribution — Pantheistic ideas — Respect for the dead — Care and expense lavished on tombs — Construction of tombs — Of basalt slabs — Prime minister's family tomb—Usually built near dwelling-houses—Customs on east coast—Noble and royal tombs — Vazimba graves — Cenotaphs — Memorial pillars — Sepulture denied to criminals—Mourning at decease of friends—Lying-in-state—Funeral of lady of rank—Custom of killing bullocks—Sanctity attached to graves—Duration of mourning—Custom of fàmadiham-pàty—Funeral rites for a sovereign—Description of funeral of Radàma I.—Shaving the head and disuse of luxuries—Gorgeous decorations of palace—Silver coffin — Enormous sums spent — Alleged portents before death of Rànavàlona I.—Unhonoured obsequies of Radàma II.—Funeral of Queen Ràsohèrina — Arrangements for burial — Description of tomb — Valuable property and money buried with corpse.

THE notions entertained by the Malagasy with regard to the spiritual part of man and a future state are very uncertain and indefinite; and it is difficult to obtain from them any accurate statement as to their belief in a soul and its condition after death. The psychology of the people may be briefly summed up in the following ideas. There is, firstly, the *aina*, or life, common to man and the animals, which is supposed to be lost or diffused in the atmosphere at death; secondly, the *saina*, or mind, the intellectual part of human nature, which is equally lost when separated from the body; and lastly, there is the *fanàhy*, or spirit, the nearest equivalent that can be found to our idea of soul or immortal part. This word appears to be a concrete form of the personal idea, the "ego," to use a philosophical term—that which individualises (*fan* is the substantive

form or prefix of the causative, and *ahy*, me), that which makes me, or separates me from other existences. This word *fanàhy* is also used to denote disposition, temper, or character, and the idea of its immortality seems only vaguely present to the minds of the people; although at the same time the custom of praying to the spirits of their departed ancestors certainly favours the opinion that the belief *has* existed, although perhaps only in a dim misty way, never accurately stated, but yet implied.

Some explain that the departed only exist in the *matòatòa*, or ghost, which is said to remain near the tomb, but the fact that prayers are offered and sacrifices presented to such spirits implies a belief in their real existence. The Malagasy, like most nations, not only believe in ghosts much in the same way as is common in Europe, but also in the apparition, or *fetch*, appearing before death as a premonition of approaching dissolution. In some parts of the country the doctrine of the transmigration of souls into the bodies of animals is held, and the wicked are believed to be punished by imprisonment in the forms of wild cats, owls, crocodiles, and other creatures, which are regarded with dread by the people.

The belief in a future state of rewards and punishments seems, for all practical purposes, to have hardly any existence. Yet in some of their proverbs and fables it is not indistinctly taught. "Better be guilty with men than guilty before God" surely implies something like retribution; while a fable called "Asking of the Dead" states it very clearly. This story represents a man who is termed Andrian-arinarind-raini-si-reniny (literally, "one warned by his father and his mother") as taking a wife called Ratsihitanandro, *i.e.* "not seen by the day;" and being seized with illness, he sends to inquire of the dead, who lie

in a series of family tombs, concerning the state of the departed, whether it is easy or painful. There were five tombs side by side, and beginning at the newest, or southernmost, the messenger puts the question as directed. The dead in that vault reply: "Ask those to the north, for they have lain there two years, while we have been dead but one." And so he is referred from one to the other, until he comes to the fifth, or last, and its inmates reply: "Difficult indeed is the going-out of life; but when the life is departed, the good-doers shall see good, the evil-doers shall see evil."

Like many other ideas upon subjects connected with religion, these beliefs in a future state seem to exist as traditions only, or in fables and proverbs, and to have little influence upon the thoughts or lives of the people—superstition, idolatrous observances, and mere ceremonies having almost entirely taken their place as rules of conduct. Some of the expressions used when speaking of the dead have something like a pantheistic notion involved in them. For instance, they speak of their friends as "*làsan' ko Andriamànitra*," *i. e.* "gone to *be* God," as if some idea of absorption into the Divine essence were entertained.

The Malagasy hold their departed ancestors in high respect and honour; indeed, as we shall presently see, they pay almost divine honours to them, especially to deceased sovereigns; and, as a natural consequence, they take great pains in everything relating to funeral rites, and spend large sums upon their tombs. In fact, it may be said that a Malagasy will lay out far more money upon his family grave than he does upon his dwelling-house. He will reside in a poor mean structure of clay or split bamboo, yet the tomb must be made of solid stone; he will wear a dress of coarse and cheap material, but his dead relatives

must be shrouded in silk lambas. As soon as a man is married and becomes the head of a household, he sets about preparing a family vault. Property to a large amount is spent in the materials and labour, and the structure will employ his leisure time and attention for months, and perhaps for years; its construction is in fact one of the chief events of his life, while he will sometimes spend so large a sum in celebrating the funeral observances and feasts, especially those for parents, as to impoverish himself and his family for many a year to come.

In Imérina and other central provinces, tombs, except those of the poorest classes, are always made of stone. They are generally in the form of a vault, partly sunk below the surface of the ground, and partly rising above it. The walls and ceiling of this chamber are formed, not of cut and dressed masonry, but of large slabs of hard blue basalt. These are detached from the surface of the rock by the action of fire. The size of the slab required being fixed upon, a fire of cowdung is lighted and kept burning for several hours upon the lines marked out, so that the rock becomes red-hot. The fire is then removed, and water is dashed over the heated surface; the contraction causes the stone to split in layers varying from three or four inches to a foot or more in thickness. As the slabs have frequently to be brought from considerable distances, and there are no wheeled vehicles, their conveyance is a serious undertaking. Generally the help of friends and neighbours is obtained, and sometimes a hundred people or more may be seen taking a large slab to the tomb of some great man or high military officer. In the case of the chiefs of villages, the whole population of a district will turn out to carry the stones required. A number of long poles crossing each other are lashed firmly to the slab,

so that two or three score men may bear it on their shoulders, and so, with an immense amount of shouting and excitement and many stoppages, it is gradually borne to its destination.

ANCIENT TOMB.

Around the sides of the vault are a number of shelves, formed of similar slabs to those used for the walls and ceiling. Here the corpses are laid, wrapped in a number of red silk lambas. No coffin is used in the grave, although a kind of box is sometimes employed in carrying the corpse from the dwelling to its last resting-place.

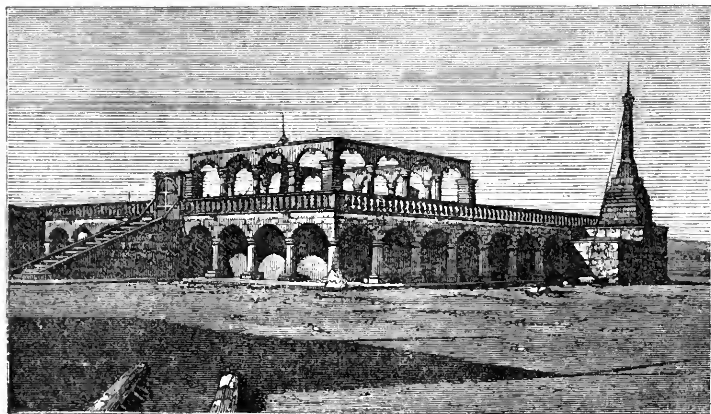
The exterior of the vault is finished in a variety of ways, chiefly depending upon the amount of property possessed by the owner. Those who are poor frequently cover the

stonework with a square mound of earth, raised only three or four feet above the surface; but usually, stonework of some kind is built around the earthen mound, which is generally in three stages, diminishing at each step. In the older tombs these are faced with rough pieces of basalt of various sizes, while at the east end of the grave an upright pointed slab of undressed rock is fixed, somewhat in the same way as a headstone in an English churchyard.

Of late years a more expensive style of tomb has been adopted, and in the neighbourhood of Antanànarìvo many may be seen of large size. These are also in three stages, but are faced with dressed stonework; each stage is about five feet high, and is finished with a bold moulding of classic outline. The lowest stage is sometimes from forty to fifty feet long by about two-thirds of these dimensions in width. A flight of steps leads up to the second stage, and the opening into the vault is closed by a slab. In some cases an ornamental headstone, carved and moulded, is fixed to the upper portion of the tomb, and in two or three instances the name and honours of the owner are cut in the upright face. Occasionally these headstones are ornamented with a kind of finial or square flower; but the single instance previously alluded to, on the north road out of Antanànarìvo, where a shield and spear are carved upon the side of an obelisk-like monument, is the only example with which I am acquainted where anything like symbolic sculpture is employed.

The finest tomb in the country is that belonging to the family of the prime minister. It is situated on the outskirts of the capital, on the main road leading to the west, and was built by Rainihàro, for many years chief adviser to Queen Rànavàlona I., and father of the present and late premiers.

This tomb is a very large structure. It is about sixty feet square, and surrounded by a stone verandah, supported on columns with moulded bases and capitals, and carrying segmental arches. This part of the building is about twelve or fourteen feet high. A flight of steps leads up to the top, and upon the level surface is an open arcade, also square in plan, the arches having elegantly-carved dropping keystones. At each angle of the front is a graceful



PRIME MINISTER'S TOMB.

structure, columnar in shape, for supporting the lightning-conductors. These columns rest on very massive square pedestals, and are banded with round mouldings covering the shafts, and finished by an elegant kind of capital. The bases have very large semicircular mouldings. The whole structure has somewhat of a Hindoo appearance as to style, and in some of its details is not unlike parts of Assyrian buildings at Persepolis. It is all well-built with large

blocks of granite, and is probably the best example of native masonry in the island. It was twelve years in building, and was only finished about seven years ago.

This tomb stands in a large square courtyard; around three sides of the area are a number of timber houses, all roofed with wooden shingles, and with the characteristic high-pitched roofs and horned gables. These dwellings are inhabited by the servants and retainers of the family. Such an arrangement is a common one for the tombs of people of respectable position. The family vault is generally constructed in the courtyard of the country-house, which in most cases is in the neighbourhood of the city, or within a few miles of it. Sometimes, as in this instance, the slaves and dependents live round it and form quite a village, which is generally enclosed by high walls of clay. At the entrance a massive stone g teway is often built.

The Malagasy have little of that disposition to put out of sight as much as possible the remembrance of death which seems so natural to us. In many premises outside the city proper at Antanànarìvo, the tombs are built close to the houses; and so were they in former times within the walls, where many ancient tombs still exist, although no longer used. Nor is it legal for a corpse to remain for above a day within the walls of the capital, except in the case of the sovereign, who alone may be buried in the city. The royal tombs are in the courtyard of the palaces, some at Antanànarìvo and others at Ambòhimànga, so that the houses of the dead and the living sovereigns almost touch one another.

The custom of interring in a public burial-ground or cemetery is partially adopted by the Hovas. There are a large number of ancient graves at the northern end of the capital, at Fàravòhitra, some of considerable size; and five miles

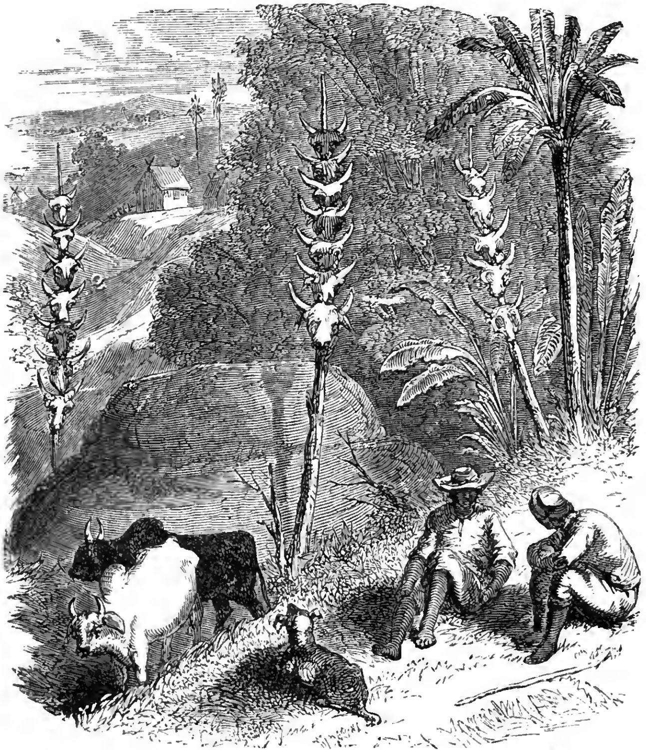
farther to the north there are about thirty large family graves in a line, and being on a rising ground they are conspicuous objects at some distance. But the more usual plan is to build the tomb near the dwelling-house.

Amongst the tribes on the east coast, tombs are made in the form of a long, low, narrow oblong of clay, and roofed with grass or leaves. They also bury the dead in a kind of coffin, made of the trunk of a tree split in halves and then hollowed out to receive the corpse. The graves in this part of the country are generally surrounded by a fencing of wooden stakes. In an excursion to Itàsy, about fifty miles to the west of the capital, we found a tomb differing from those common in Imérina. The sides were formed into panels with small pieces of stone, so as to resemble windows, and the top was sloped in a roof-like form.

The royal family and certain ranks of the Andrians have the right to build over their tombs a timber house, called *tràno-manàra* or *tràno-màsina*. These structures are just like small dwelling-houses, except that they have no windows. They are usually well-built, the roof covered with shingles, and the gable-boards finished with a curved ornament. It is difficult to say what use they are supposed to serve; probably, in the first instance, as a wooden house for the living was a mark of rank, so one built over the tomb was regarded in the same manner.

In many places in the neighbourhood of Antanànarìvo there are a number of ancient graves, which are commonly called those of the Vazìmba, the reputed aboriginal inhabitants. These are regarded with great reverence and even dread, from a belief that these Vazìmba are a kind of demon or demigod, some being malicious and others benevolent. Frightful consequences, in the opinion of the heathen part of the population, would follow any desecration or dis-

respect shown to these graves. They are rude and shapeless mounds of earth and stone, and are frequently overshadowed by the *fàno*, a species of mimosa, which tree,



MALAGASY TOMBS.

probably from this circumstance, is held to have a sort of sanctity, the seeds being used in the working of the *sikìdy*, or divination. These seeds are of the size of a small bean,

and are contained in large pods nearly a foot long, which have an odd appearance when ripe, their pale-yellow colour contrasting strangely with the delicate green of the leaves.

Besides the ordinary graves, the Malagasy are accustomed to erect a kind of vacant tomb or cenotaph for those who had gone to a distance and fallen in war. These structures are made by forming a low wall of earth or flat pieces of rock, enclosing three sides of a square or oblong, with a headstone like that fixed in an ordinary tomb, the opposite side being left open. An opinion, somewhat similar to that held by the Greeks and Romans, seems to be entertained as to the restlessness of the spirit unless a tomb is provided; and it is believed that these pseudo-tombs will afford a resting-place for the *fanàhy* of the departed, although his body may remain unburied. Otherwise it would have to associate with wild cats, owls, and other creatures of ill-omen. This notion leads them to take great care to provide that, in case of death happening when away from home, the bones at least should be brought to the family vault; and friends going together to a distance on military service will make a mutual agreement to perform this office for the other in case either should survive.

In many parts of Imérina and the central provinces, rude obelisks of basalt rock, twelve to eighteen feet high, are set up as memorials of some great chief of former times. These are called *fàhatsiaròvana, i.e.* "causing to remember," or *tsàngam-bàto, i.e.* "erected stones."

The rites of sepulture are denied to criminals, whose bodies are mostly left to be eaten by dogs, and it is only by special favour that relatives can gain permission to bury their friends. Lepers are buried without any funeral ceremonies, and in some unenclosed place. In some instances, after a lapse of time the bodies are disinterred, and then

deposited with the usual observances in the tombs of their families.

From what has been already said as to the vague notions entertained of a future state, it will be easily seen how uncertain and gloomy must be the feelings of a dying heathen Malagasy. The subject of death is avoided as much as possible by the friends and relatives until it is evident that the last moments are approaching. In such cases, if matters connected with property have not been previously arranged, its disposal is pointed out and the heir named. In former times, if death took place during the daytime, no outward expressions of mourning were allowed to be made until after sunset. Then the relatives and friends gave full vent to their grief, in the loud demonstrative manner common to most Eastern nations, with piercing outcries and passionate addresses to the departed: "Why did you leave me? Oh, come back and fetch me to you." "Oh, my beloved relative, let me go with you; who can be to me what you were?" etc. These and similar expressions of sorrow, more or less sincere, are still made use of. The connections of the family and other friends soon assemble and fill the house, and join their lamentations with those of the nearer relatives. The outward signs of mourning are, in the case of women, allowing their long hair to hang dishevelled over the shoulders; while both sexes put on their poorest and coarsest garments, and make no use of jewellery or other ornaments. Messages are generally sent to friends at a distance, and it is considered a kind attention to visit and express condolence.

Some few months after reaching the capital, I was informed of the death of an officer of the rank of 14th Honour, with whom I had some acquaintance, and whose wife had done me many little acts of kindness. On reaching

the house, together with a friend, we found the widow seated on the ground, wearing a lamba and dress of the dark-blue Pondicherry cloth, which is used to some extent as a sign of mourning, especially by widows. The walls of the house were hung with most rich and beautiful silk lambas. In one corner was a space screened off by curtains from the rest of the room, and within this lay the corpse wrapped in dark red cloth. We expressed our sympathy in a few words, and presented a piece of money, as is customary. This is generally given with an apology for its smallness, deprecating the value of the gift, and saying it is to buy some trifling article of dress necessary for the funeral, when it is perhaps really sufficient to purchase something much more costly; as, "Do not blame us for this trifling sum" (calling it *vàriraivènty*, the ninetieth part of sixpence) "we offer. We come to wipe away tears," etc. To which it is usual to reply by hoping that similar trouble may not befall the giver.

Except in the case of the very poorest, a bullock is killed and divided amongst those assembled, and presents of beef are sent to those who have visited the mourners. This beef is called *hèna-ràtsy*, *i.e.* evil meat, and none of it may be given to dogs.

In the month of March, 1866, the wife of Rainimàharàvo, chief secretary of state, died; and as she was a sister of the prime minister, the funeral ceremonies were conducted on a rather extensive scale. About three weeks previously I had spent an evening with her and her husband, and another officer of high rank, at the house of the physician to the mission; and was much pleased with her lively cheerful manners, little thinking that within a few days from that time she would have passed away from us. She was, of course, amongst the nearest personal attendants upon the

queen, and was one of the most estimable. It was said that she had been for some time previously a diligent reader of the New Testament, and a seeker after truth.

Having been informed that the *fisehòana*, or lying-in-state, literally "the showing," would take place on the day following her death, several members of the mission went out to Tsàrasàotra, the country-house of Rainimàharàvo, where the first part of the funeral ceremonies were to be observed. The road to the place, about six miles distant, was full of people going to visit the relatives; for when one of the great people die, almost everyone goes to the funeral. The house is a very large one, standing in gardens laid out with walks and flower-beds and clipped hedges, more European in style than many of those in Madagascar. The grounds were crowded with people, and there was a great deal of noise and confusion. A band of musicians, with brass instruments, were going round and round the house, playing tunes, sometimes of a rather lively kind; and then, at intervals, English hymn-tunes, amongst which I recognised "Mariners" and other familiar airs.

We sent word that we wished to pay our respects to Rainimàharàvo, and presently several of his aides-de-camp came to escort us. The house consists of one very large room in the centre, with smaller ones at each end, some of them opening into the chief apartment by open-work partitions. About one-third of the house was filled with the female slaves, sitting on the floor as close as they could pack, with hair let loose, bare shoulders, and coarse hemp lambas bound under the armpits. Another third part was filled with female relatives and friends, showing the same signs of mourning, except that they were better dressed, while a crowd of men filled the remaining space. The widower was in one of the end rooms, surrounded by his

male relatives and friends. We spoke a few words of condolence, and gave five dollars, as their phrase is, "to buy cloth for wrapping the dead," after which we retired. The corpse was in a tent out-of-doors, at one side of the house. Just as we were going out of the grounds some of the officers came after us, bringing two dollars, saying that the bullocks were not yet killed, and asking us to accept the money as a substitute for beef. Hundreds of people were streaming out of Antanànarìvo and filling the roads as we returned home.

On the following day, the corpse was brought back to the capital, and buried in the prime minister's large tomb at Isòtry. He was not allowed by the queen to go and see his sister, or to take any part in the funeral. The idea of pollution which they entertain about a dead body would have prevented his approach to her majesty, or even entering the palace for a month; and it was impossible to allow of such a hindrance to public business as this would have occasioned.

At the funerals of wealthy persons, or those of high rank, very large numbers of bullocks are often killed. At the death of Rainiharo, prime minister to Queen Rànavàlona I., a bullock was slaughtered at every few paces along the main road leading from his house in the upper part of the city to the tomb at Isòtry, a distance of more than a mile; and this was continued for several days.

In some cases, if the family vault is not completed at the death of one of a household, the corpse is placed temporarily in some part of the house until the tomb is ready for its occupant. Such a case occurred at a house nearly adjoining the printing premises at Imarìvolànitra, and it was not a little annoying to hear the sound of a band of music marching round the house, and playing, with only

short intervals, for more than a whole day and night, while the ceremonies and feasting were going on.

The burial usually takes place on the second day after death. If the corpse has to be brought from a distance, the chief mourners ride in palanquins. In one instance I noticed a funeral procession in which a kind of coffin was used, covered with dark-blue cloth; upon this lay a bonnet of European make, and other small articles of female dress. In the case of an officer in the army or government service, a uniform coat, sash, and sword are often placed on the bier, as is usual at a military funeral in Europe. Attendants walk at each side, carrying small fans of white and coloured paper to drive away the flies, and these fans are stuck in the earth over the grave.

On arriving at the place of interment, a funeral chant or dirge is sung by the women as the body is laid in its resting-place on one of the shelves of the vault. A short speech is usually delivered by some member of the family of the deceased, thanking those present for their attendance and sympathy. Fresh earth is heaped over the corpse, and after the newly-killed meat has been distributed, the assembly disperses without any further ceremony. The bier is left at the side of the grave, and is never again used for any purpose whatever. It is considered as polluted, and no one would dare to take the wood, even for fuel, and it is left to decay by the action of the weather. There is a necessity for some strong protection, such as is afforded by their superstition, to the sanctity of graves; for the family vaults often contain valuable property, in addition to a number of costly silk lambas, which might present a temptation to a thief. There is a notion that those articles of personal property which the deceased valued during his life, will be still of some service to him in death. Soon

after the establishment of the first mission schools, an intelligent lad, whose parents were of high rank, died at Antanànarìvo; and in the vault, his slates, pencils, and school-books were placed, together with othér articles he had prized. In the case of the sovereigns, as we shall presently see, enormous wealth in money and valuables of all kinds is buried with them.

Not long after the introduction of Christianity into the island, fifty years ago, and also since the re-establishment of the Protestant mission in 1862, religious services similar to those customary in England were introduced at the burial of Christian natives; and frequently a sermon or address is delivered to those assembled—as many of those present, being heathen, would not be accessible except on such occasions.

The time of mourning for a husband or wife continues for a year, but a shorter time is observed for other relatives. During this period a certain degree of self-denial is practised, such as absence from public amusements, and disuse of luxuries in dress and living; no oils or perfumes are used; and in the case of a widow, the hair is left untouched, so that it presents a strange fuzzy appearance, standing out all round the head. A woman who should marry within twelve months after her husband's death, would be considered as acting in a very shameless manner, and would probably be discarded by his family.

When the head of a household has completed his family vault, he sometimes removes into it the corpses of his father and mother from their former grave; and these occasions are made times of festivity rather than mourning. In May, 1866, we had an opportunity of seeing a ceremony of this kind, which is called *fàmadìham-pàty*—literally, "turning a corpse." The place was Anòsy, a pretty village

seven or eight miles north of the capital, and belonging chiefly to the family of the former secretary of state, Ràhanìraka. An hour and a half's ride brought us to the

MALAGASY WIDOW.

village, where three or four hundred people had assembled. We found Ramàka, our host, together with his family, all dressed in their best clothes, and some wearing handsome

silk lambas. After resting a little, we went to inspect the new tomb, which was beautifully finished, and built and roofed with very large stones. Ramàka's first wife's corpse had already been deposited on one of the stone shelves. It was wrapped in a most beautiful lamba of scarlet silk for the outermost covering. In a short time a procession was formed, and the corpse of Ramàka's father was with some little ceremony removed from the old tomb, and placed in the new one. It was preceded by a band of music playing military and sacred airs, and followed by Ramàka, who held one of his little boys by the hand, accompanied by a number of his male relatives. On the top of the bier was laid a very handsome uniform coat, almost covered with gold embroidery. A short *kabàry*, or speech, was then made, recounting the ancestry and honours of the deceased, and informing all present that the owner set apart this as his family tomb. As he belonged to one of the highest ranks of Andrians, a small and beautifully-finished timber house was erected over the vault. Several bullocks were soon afterwards killed, and a dinner, provided for us and the other visitors, concluded this strange ceremony.

The care evinced by the Malagasy to honour the dead is shown in nothing more strikingly than in the mixture of barbaric and civilised splendour with which the funeral rites of the sovereign are celebrated. The father of Radàma I. was buried with a magnificence and outlay of property never before seen, several thousand head of cattle being slaughtered on the occasion. But the observances at the death of Radàma himself far exceeded them. Fourteen thousand oxen, worth here five Spanish dollars each, were slaughtered and given to the people for food, at and before the funeral! It is believed that the expenses of the ceremony were not less than sixtv thousand pounds sterling.

But little is known of the funeral ceremonies at the death of Rànavàlona I., for there were very few Europeans then residing at the capital. Shortly before her death there appears to have been some unusual atmospheric or meteoric phenomena seen, which were believed by the people to be premonitions of her death. An extract from one of these accounts, sent to the Rev. W. Ellis, at Mauritius, before he came on to Madagascar, is a good illustration of the imaginative character of the Malagasy mind, and of the tendency of the people to believe in omens, portents, and supernatural interpositions. It is as follows:—

"On the 12th of April, 1861, there was an appearance of fire from Ankemiheny extending to Ranofotsy and unto all the mountains. When the people in the country round saw the fire, they kindled fire near their dwellings, for they said, 'Perhaps the queen has bathed again;' for to those in the country this light appeared as if it was in the capital, and to those in the capital it appeared as if in the country. There were also sounds or voices like music coming up from Isòtry (the site of the prime minister's tomb) to Àndohàlo (the daily market, above a mile distant); and when the people heard the sound they came to look, but nothing was seen; only sound was heard; and it was a pleasant sound, though making sad, for it was the end of the year.

"It was in *fàraràno*, or autumn, and about seven o'clock in the evening, when this fire was seen, and it lasted for an hour. Next morning, the queen, inquiringly, said: 'What fire was that last night? Do you kindle fires again before the feast of the new year?' And the attendants answered, 'We kindled no fires.' And when the queen heard that, she said to the heads of the people, 'What fire is this?' And they answered, 'This is not the fire of man, but of

God.' And some said, 'It is to increase the kingdom of the sovereign.' Then the queen inquired again of the judges and heads of the people, saying, 'What is it thought this fire is?' Then said those whom she questioned, 'From Andrian-ampoin-Imérina (ancestor of the present dynasty) and Prince Ramahàtra, like a foreshadowing of coming death. Like that, for it is small, yet not like that, for it was over the water and the rice, and valleys and hills, although it was not high nor low.'

"And from that day forward the queen prayed earnestly to the idols, the objects of her trust, for she was afraid. And there was an officer who said to the prince, 'This fire is a jubilee, to gather together the dispersed, and to redeem the lost.' And the hearts of those who heard that were deeply affected." *

Whatever was the cause of these singular appearances, the people were not mistaken in their expectations of approaching changes. The queen soon afterwards became ill, and eventually died within four months from the time when this mysterious fire was seen; so that the reign of terror ceased, and the beautiful words of the officer to the prince were a true prophecy: the "dispersed" by persecution were "gathered together," "the lost" were "redeemed," and the bright opening of the reign of Radàma II. was indeed "a jubilee" to the people, who had been ground down under the cruel oppression of Rànavàlona.

Owing to the political disturbances which caused the loss both of crown and life to Radàma, he was buried secretly and by night, without even the honours customary at the interment of a private person. Within the last few months the decease of Queen Ràsohèrina was made the occasion of a magnificent display, little inferior to that at

* "Madagascar Revisited," pp. 82, 83.

the funeral of Radàma I. I am indebted for this description to letters from the Revds. W. E. and G. Cousins:—

"The late queen died on Wednesday night, the 1st of April, 1868, and from that time until the following Tuesday week the excitement was very great. It was announced to the people on the following morning that Ràsohèrina had *niambòho* ('retired,' or turned her back), and that her cousin Ramòma had succeeded, under the title of Rànavàlona II. The capital was crowded with people from the country, both men and women—the men having to work in the preparation of a new tomb immediately north of the first Radàma's, in the royal courtyard; and the women having to sit in crowds in the chief apartment of the great palace, Manjàka Miàdana, to mourn day and night.

"On Friday morning the people presented a very strange spectacle. They looked as if they had been suddenly transformed into Hindoos. It is customary here when a sovereign dies to cut off the hair, and consequently we found a nation of bald-heads, some of them quite glossy. It was amusing to meet our friends, as in many cases we did not recognise them until they spoke to us. A man walked up into the town with me in the morning, and from his familiarity I conclude he was a man I had known very well; but I did not recognise him, and have not been able to recall his identity since. The strangest part of the business was that the clipping was all done at once, for on Friday morning the entire country around Antanànarìvò was clean-clipped, except some score or so of privileged Malagasy and the Europeans. All the people also went about with their lambas down below their shoulders, and without the usual shirt generally worn underneath.

"While the tomb was being made, cannon and musketry

were fired all day long, the chief road through the city up to the palace being lined with soldiers.

"On Friday afternoon we went to the palace to take our present (sixty dollars) towards the funeral expenses, and also to present a dollar as hasina to the new queen. We were taken all over the palace-yard to see the arrangements that were being made for the funeral. In one part were the silversmiths with their upright bellows and charcoal-fires, all busy transforming dollars into small plates, each plate formed of fifty dollars riveted together in a rough style. These were to be made into a coffin about eight feet long, and three-and-a-half feet in width and depth. In another part of the ground, men were busy making the foundations of the stone tomb. Numbers of women were bringing water, and in the large palace were two or three hundred women sitting with bare shoulders, and all making a low moan as a sign of grief. In one corner of the large room where they were all seated, was a small state bedstead with scarlet hangings, and richly ornamented with gold. Of course the mourners were to weep as if the deceased queen were really lying in state, but it was known that the corpse was in another building. Round the bedstead were about a dozen women with fans of scarlet and gold, in appearance very much like small ornamental fire-screens, and with these they kept up a constant fanning. There was a constant coming and going all the time, as the women took turns in this 'weeping,' and relieved one another. They look upon this merely as *fànompòana*, compulsory government service, and their grief was not so violent as to prevent them from stopping to have a good stare at the English ladies who went to see the ceremony.

"One palace in the courtyard, called Bé-sàkana, an old and sacred building, was draped with scarlet cloth, and the

palisades round the palace-yard and some of the buildings were covered with white calico. The soldiers on guard were allowed to keep their hats on, and had white bands on them as a sign of mourning. All other people were prohibited from wearing hats, and also shoes; the use of music, singing, looking-glasses, bedsteads, and articles of luxury generally, was also forbidden.

"After a week we went again to the palace, and saw the tomb, which was then nearly finished. It is a raised mound faced with granite, and having on the top a small timber house, surrounded by a verandah, with a curved zinc-covered roof, very pretty and somewhat Eastern in style. It is painted red, with gilding here and there, the roof being coloured white. We went up and saw the internal arrangements so far as they were completed. The place where the body was to be deposited is a large square vault, with an uncovered wooden bed inside it, both open, and on this was placed the silver coffin, which took as many as $22,000 (£4400).

"We were also taken into Bé-sàkana, in which house the corpse of a sovereign must rest during one night previous to burial. The building was then being prepared for the reception of the corpse. Not only was the roof completely covered with scarlet cloth, but the inside walls up to the roof were hung with expensive silk lambas, some of them most brilliant in colour.

"On Tuesday afternoon the funeral took place. We were nearly all present, as were also the French, about forty Europeans altogether, and an excellent position had been provided for us by the officers. No description could convey a just idea of the whole scene. We reached the palace at about three o'clock. The whole court looked black with the cropped heads and bare shoulders of the people, who, to

the number of several thousand, crowded the area. Soldiers were placed round the yard, and also to keep open paths where required. From the door of the large palace to the bottom of the incline, which had been made in front of the tomb, was a line of women about three deep, with their heads bent quite down, and only their bare backs showing. They were, to all appearance, weeping—at least many that were near me seemed to be.

"At half-past three the body was brought out. It was inside the scarlet bedstead I have already described, and was carried by officers in uniform. On the bier was placed a crown, and round it were hung some of the late queen's state robes. The prime minister in a gold-embroidered velvet tunic went before the bier, carrying a reversed rifle. Several other high officers were with him, and as they came to the front of the tomb they discharged their rifles. The corpse was raised and placed on a stage covered with carpets, that had been prepared for it immediately in front of the wooden building over the tomb. The officers again discharged their rifles, and then retired to the Silver Palace. The prime minister was apparently weeping bitterly as he retired. Some said he was really touched with sorrow, and others that his excessive grief was only got up for the occasion.

"The body remained in front of the tomb until sunset, the splendid cloths and gold ornamentation glittering in the sunbeams which fell full upon them. The band was playing old English tunes nearly all the time, and now and then in the intervals a native drum was beaten, accompanied by the blowing of large hollow shells. During this time a company of fifty young men, chiefly nobles, were busy carrying articles of dress, etc., to be buried with the body of their late owner. They made six separate journeys.

More than two hundred dresses of silk, satin, and velvet were placed in the tomb, and amongst other things I noticed a lady's saddle, two chests of drawers, some water-coolers, decanters, a large glass and silver épergne, a small dressing-table, a papier-maché work-table, several lamps, a large armchair, some gilt chains, and lastly a chest of money ($ 11,000) which took twenty men to carry.

"When the sun had set, the prime minister came back, no longer in his state robe, but in a simple lamba; and after staying a short time, he and the other officers went away, and left the placing of the body in the tomb to a class of nobles who consider it their special duty to bury kings and queens. The bier was soon dismantled, and the royal corpse laid in its last resting-place; and after this had been accomplished, a message was sent from the queen to the Europeans, saying she had friends and relations indeed in them, who were ready to sympathise with her in her sorrow, etc., to which we made a suitable acknowledgment, and then retired home.

"After we had left, there were other ceremonies to be performed, and the cannon did not cease firing until past midnight. Amongst other things, some one had to go to the door of the tomb after it was closed, and call out to Ràsohèrina's spirit, asking her not to send disease or enemies. For some days after the funeral, all the people were much excited over the distribution of bullocks, about three thousand of which were, according to the national custom, divided among them."

CHAPTER X.

ORIGIN, AND POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DIVISIONS OF THE MALAGASY: ARMY, LAW, AND GOVERNMENT.

Asiatic origin of the people — Date of arrival — Unity of language — Argument from this — Vazìmbas — Kimos, a race of dwarfs — Population — Physical appearance of the Malagasy — Hovas — Bétsilèos — Àntsiànakas — Bétsimisàrakas — Sàkalàvas — Ethnology still obscure — Former feudal system — Robert Drury — Modern change into an absolutism — Causes of this revolution — Rise of military power — Abolition of slave-trade by British aid — Radàma becomes King of Madagascar — Army — Honours — Dekany — Officers of the palace — Disproportion of officers to privates — Appearance and efficiency of native troops — Drill — Reviews — Uniform — English words of command — Old soldiers, or mèna-vàzana — Bodyguard — Military punishments — Guards or police — Great power of one family — Government — Council — Recent advances towards constitutionalism — Judges — Vàdin-tàny — Heads of people — Soldiers and civilians — Andrians and Hovas — Laws — Courts of justice — Legal procedure — Tangèna ordeal — Punishments for crime — Their barbarous character — Incidents illustrative of this — Ameliorating influence of Christianity — Corruption and bribery — Foreign representatives — Treaties — Need of help and counsel.

THE question of the origin of the inhabitants of Madagascar is still a somewhat unsettled one. But we may safely say that the Malagasy as a whole are not African, but rather of Asiatic descent. This appears an extraordinary fact when we consider how near the island is to the continent of Africa,—within three hundred miles at the nearest point,—while it is no less than eighteen hundred miles from Ceylon, and nearly three thousand miles from the south-eastern parts of Asia. Yet, on several accounts, there seems no reason to doubt that the Malagasy are allied to that great race of people which spread from the Malay

peninsula through Sumatra, Borneo, and the Asiatic archipelago, through the islands of the Pacific, and possibly even to some parts of the South American coast. Amongst other reasons for this conclusion, are the physical appearance and mental capabilities of the people, their social habits and customs, and, it may be added, their handicrafts, and lastly, their language. This is perhaps the most conclusive of all tests. Not only are some words absolutely identical with those spoken in the Malay peninsula, but, what is far more important, the *structure* of the language, and especially the manner of forming the verbal inflections, is exactly the same.

We may safely conclude that all the races now found in Madagascar have inhabited the country for a very long period, for if they ever spoke different languages they have so far amalgamated with each other that there is, broadly speaking, but one tongue now spoken throughout the length and breadth of the island. It is true that there are some slight differences between the speech of the people inhabiting the coast and those in the interior; a few words are used by some tribes with which others are unacquainted; some few have also a slightly different force, and certain vowels have a different pronunciation. But this does not affect the main body and groundwork of the language, which is substantially one and the same all over Madagascar. It may be affirmed also that these local differences of dialect are not so great as those found in different counties in England.

This fact appears the more remarkable when we consider the size of the country, which exceeds in area that of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and also the comparatively small amount of communication between the different provinces of the island. In our own country,

with all the intercourse between every part of the kingdom, local dialects and provincialisms keep a strong hold upon the mass of the people, so that in some of the more retired rural districts, educated persons often find it difficult to understand much of what the inhabitants say; and we should have expected such considerations to apply with much greater force to a country like Madagascar.

Owing to the absence of any literature, and from the scantiness of oral tradition as to the former condition of the country, it is difficult to gain any trustworthy information from the Malagasy as to their origin. But the slight and vague accounts which have been handed down, confirm, as far as they go, the evidence given by language as to the direction from which their ancestors advanced into the interior of the country. The people say that their fathers came from the south-east into the central provinces of the island; and from their Malay affinities of speech, and physical and mental peculiarities, showing their alliance with the tribes of south-eastern Asia, we should have expected them to come from the east coast. The south-east trades blow for most of the year, without much variation, over a great part of Madagascar and the Southern Indian Ocean; and when we remember the immense distances which have been traversed by parties of South Sea Islanders on the Pacific, it is not so difficult to account for the coming of the ancestors of the Malagasy race from the Malay peninsula. The Malayo-Polynesian tribes have always been expert and adventurous navigators, and their skill in constructing canoes of large size is probably a very ancient acquirement.

It seems likely that there have been two or three waves of immigration into the island at periods possibly separated

by considerable intervals of time; but no tradition gives any clue to the date of these arrivals, and the want of a written language precludes any information being derived from records, either in books or monuments. With regard to the Hovas, it seems probable that they dispossessed an earlier race who inhabited Imérina and the central provinces. These aborigines, or, more probably, immigrants of an earlier period, are known by the name of Vazìmba; they are now chiefly kept in remembrance by their ancient tombs, which remain in many parts of the interior of the island, and are regarded with an idolatrous reverence by the Malagasy.

The traditional accounts given of this people, relate that they were a race somewhat below the middle stature, with a remarkably thin and flat conformation of the head, and narrowing to the forehead. It is supposed that the Vazìmba were either exterminated, or became absorbed in the conquering races, and do not now exist as a separate people, except in a part of the Sàkalàva country, to the west of the island, between two large rivers, where a colony called by this name is reported to be found.

The earlier writers on Madagascar mention frequently a nation of dwarfs, called Kimos, or Quimos, who were said to inhabit the interior of the island, not exceeding three feet six inches in height, of a gentle disposition, and excelling in various handicrafts. No traces of such an extraordinary race have been discovered by Europeans who have resided in the capital during the present century, and it is difficult to believe that such people could have existed without something being certainly known about them at Antanànarìvo.

The population of Madagascar was estimated during the reign of Radàma I. at about four-and-a-half millions, the

relative numbers of the chief divisions of the people being as follows:—

The Hovas	750,000
The Sàkalàvas, including the Bézànozàno, and the Antsiànaka	1,200,000
The Bétsilèo	1,500,000
The Bétànimèna and Bétsimisàraka	1,000,000
Total ..	4,450,000

It is probable that these numbers were less than in former periods, for the remains of embankments and works for irrigation, now unused, and the ruins of numerous villages in many parts of the country, testify to the former presence of inhabitants in localities long since deserted. This diminution of population was chiefly owing to the extensive slave-trade frequently carried on, as well as to war, deaths by the poison ordeal, and other causes. Since the time of Radàma it appears likely that the numbers of the people have not materially, if at all, increased. This is due to the exterminating wars carried on during the reign of Rànavàlona, and to the famine and disease which often followed the march of her armies; the female sex greatly predominates, owing to the continual drafts made upon the male population during that merciless sovereign's rule.

Physically considered, the Malagasy people as a whole may be described as somewhat below the average height of Europeans. Their figures are graceful and even elegant—the men perhaps more so than the women, who are more inclined to corpulence than the former. The great distinction is in colour, which varies from all shades of fairness through brown and chocolate colour, and, in a few cases, almost to black. The hair of the lighter races is generally long, black, and shining, and that of the darker peoples

more frizzly in character, but this distinction is by no means invariable.

The Hovas who inhabit the central province are without doubt the most advanced of all the different races, and are the lightest in colour, but perhaps a little below the rest in

HOVAS.

Illustrating Native Dress and Modes of Wearing the Lamba.

stature. Some few are as light in complexion as our own countrymen, but the majority are of different shades of olive, in many approaching to a dark chocolate tint.

The Bétsilèo in the southern central districts, and the Bétsimisàraka on the east coast, are not much darker than

the Hovas. It appeared to me that the women at some of the villages were lighter than the Hova women whom I afterwards saw in Imérina. The Àntsiànaka in the north are much darker, as also are the Sàkalàvas, a fine race of people inhabiting the whole western coast from north to south. Yet these, although dark, are not black, except in some few instances where there has evidently been a mixture of negro blood from the opposite shores of the Mozambique Channel. I was often struck with the bold, free, martial bearing of parties of Sàkalàvas who frequently came to the capital to bring the *hasina*, or tribute, to the queen; and it was not difficult to believe that until a recent period the Hovas, from time immemorial, had been tributary to them. It was only by the aid of disciplined troops and European arms and ammunition that the Hova chieftain, Radàma I., was able to throw off his allegiance, and by bringing them and the other tribes into subjection, make himself sovereign of Madagascar.

The Hovas, who have been the dominant race in the country during the present century, appear to have more energy and force of character than most of the tribes inhabiting the eastern coast, who are of a mild and gentle disposition. But it may be doubted if the Sàkalàvas would not still be the rulers of Madagascar had not circumstances put superior advantages into the hands of the Hovas.

The Sàkalàvas are perhaps the finest race, physically considered, and their quick, intelligent, and lively dispositions indicate great mental ability; while the Hovas are handsomer in face, and more acute and subtle in intellect. The Bétsilèo are more peacefully inclined, are fond of agricultural pursuits, and seem wanting in that energy of character which has given the Hovas such a prepon derance in the country. The coast tribes on the east are

more indolent and, some think, more immoral than the rest of their countrymen. Only when roused to action by extraordinary calls upon their exertions, do they exhibit that martial spirit which distinguishes both the Hovas and the Sàkalàvas. In the island of St. Mary on the north-east coast, and at other scattered points in the neighbourhood, there are people of a tribe calling themselves Sons of Ibrahim ; and an Arab mixture is also evident in other parts of that coast, especially to the south, in the district of Màtitànana. With some ports in the north-west of Madagascar—at Majangà, Bembatook, and the adjacent coast—Arab and Persian traders have had intercourse for many centuries, long before the island was known to Europeans. But these people have not intermarried with the natives to any extent, or so as to materially affect the character of the population of the places to which they have resorted.

There is yet much to be learned of the ethnology of the various races composing the Malagasy people. The earlier writers upon Madagascar, chiefly French, were acquainted with too limited a portion of the island to be regarded as very trustworthy informants. And during the present century, since English missionaries have resided at the capital, their labours in acquiring the language and reducing it to a written form, founding a system of school education, and giving Christian instruction during the short period of twelve or fourteen years when the founders of the mission were allowed to labour, left little time for careful and minute inquiry into merely scientific subjects. Besides this, their work was confined to the capital city and the central province, so that personal research in distant parts of the island was impracticable. During the long reign of Rànavàlona, Europeans had but slight oppor-

tunities of acquainting themselves with the country and people, so that there is a very interesting field of inquiry still to be explored. Large districts of the interior of Madagascar are yet almost unknown to Europeans; but now that a liberal policy is again inaugurated, and a more enlightened government in power, we may hope that a few years will add much interesting information to our present knowledge of the origin and peculiarities of the different races inhabiting the island, as well as of its interesting fauna and flora. Commercial treaties, concluded during the last two or three years with England, America, and France, give liberty to subjects of these nations to travel in all parts of Madagascar.

About a hundred years ago the Malagasy were divided into no fewer than fifty distinct tribes, each governed by their respective chieftains, who had extensive powers over the lives and property of their subjects. Since that time, however, one after another of the smaller states have been conquered by, and absorbed into, the larger ones, until in the time of Radàma I. they were all reduced under one sovereignty, and, with but few exceptions, acknowledged the authority of the Hova chief of Imérina.

One of the earliest and most interesting accounts which we possess of Madagascar is the narrative of Robert Drury, who was shipwrecked upon the southern coast in the year 1702. The crew of the ship to which he belonged were kindly treated by the people, but, suspecting that the natives wished to make them their slaves, the English attacked them and took their chief prisoner. But reinforcements of Malagasy coming up to assist their friends, the Europeans, who suffered much from want of food and water, and from the constant attacks made upon them, were gradually worn-out by fatigue, and, except two or three, were

all eventually killed by the people. Drury, being then a lad of fourteen years old, was spared and made a slave. He remained in the island for fifteen years, notwithstanding frequent efforts to escape, and met with many hardships and some cruelty, although upon the whole he was kindly treated by his masters. He did not penetrate to Antanànarìvo or the districts of Ankòva, nor does he appear to have heard of either one or the other; indeed, at that time the present capital was a place of no importance, being merely one of many small towns in Imérina.

The different tribes with whom Drury lived during his stay in Madagascar seem to have been frequently at war with one another, but more for purposes of plunder and cattle and slave-dealing than for conquest. Their expeditions were not accompanied with anything like the cruelty and cold-blooded atrocity which marked the march of Rànavàlona's armies, disciplined and armed with European weapons. The Malagasy tribes appear to have lived much in the same way as the freebooting Highland clans of that very time, with their frequent raids into their neighbours' domains to carry off sheep and cattle, or like the border chiefs of England and Scotland at an earlier period.

The generally kind treatment which Drury received was not an exceptional case. From the earliest date of their intercourse with Europeans, the Malagasy have shown a friendliness and a wish to conciliate, contrasting strangely with the disgraceful conduct of those who visited them, both Portuguese and French. From the first they were remarkably scrupulous in keeping to the engagements which they entered into with Europeans, and it was not until they learned by frequent experience how so-called Christians were not ashamed to deceive and injure them, that they began to use the same weapons in self-defence,

and thus acquired a reputation for duplicity which was owing in great part to those who should have set an example of honesty and truthfulness.

The original state of the different tribes inhabiting Madagascar, as seen in the accounts of Drury and other writers, seems to have combined the patriarchal and feudal elements. A chief of courage, ability, and personal bravery would attract around him more followers than one of inferior qualifications; while a reverence for authority by hereditary right, gave to all chieftains a claim upon the services of those connected with their clan. Practically, a large amount of personal liberty seems to have been enjoyed, each warrior of the tribe having the right of free speech, and expressing his opinions upon any measures proposed. This relic of earlier freedom survives in the kabàrys, or national assemblies, still called together by the sovereigns of Madagascar, where the right of free utterance is theoretically allowed, but which in many cases is of little avail against the modern arbitrary government, unless it is backed by a very general and strongly-felt opinion amongst the people at large.

During the present century the nation has passed, and is still passing, through a great revolution in political matters. The absorption of the petty states of Imérina under one government by Andrian-impòin-Imérina, and the further conquests by which he and his son, Radàma I., gained supreme power over the whole island, have produced a transitional state, in which old organisations remain nominally intact while their influence is practically obsolete. To illustrate Malagasy history from that of our own country, there has been something like the breaking-down of the feudal power of the middle ages by Henry VII. and Henry VIII., while the Parliament had not yet become

strong enough to oppose the arbitrary tendencies of the sovereign—or, more strictly speaking, had lost its earlier influence and the strength it derived from the barons, and had not yet developed the popular element to its legitimate extent. The Malagasy parliaments, the kabàrys, are still summoned, but their power is small, and only on occasions of very widespread discontent would the representatives of the people dare oppose the will of the sovereign. With the spread of intelligence and education and liberal ideas, however, the right of speech at these assemblies will gradually cease to be a meaningless form, and the popular voice will make itself heard and respected. There are occasional signs even now of such a movement, but it must be a gradual work, a growth, arising from increased knowledge and intelligence.

The changes which have made the government of Madagascar so nearly an absolute and irresponsible one, have been greatly brought about by the powerful military organisations formed by Radàma and his father, and carried on under his successor, Rànavàlona. An overwhelming army not only subdued the neighbouring states, but, as a natural consequence, repressed a great deal of individual freedom in the conqueror's own hereditary dominions; and although we cannot doubt that, on the whole, a vast ultimate advantage will accrue to the country from its being consolidated into one kingdom, still, in the process, an immense amount of injustice and oppression was committed upon inoffensive and peaceable tribes. During Rànavàlona's reign especially, an almost exterminating warfare was carried on whenever the slightest opposition was offered to her will. For the increased influence possessed by Radàma in the latter part of his reign, the British Government is to some extent responsible, although the reasons which led

them to give support to that prince were in a high degree honourable and humane. But it may be doubted whether such additional facilities for conquest and extending his authority should have been put into the hands of a partially civilised sovereign, sagacious and enlightened as, on the whole, Radàma certainly was, without more material guarantees for the just exercise of such power. Irresponsible power is a dangerous possession for even the best ruler; and although Radàma, notwithstanding his imperious character, had the welfare of his people sincerely at heart,* his successor made a fearful use of the absolute authority she derived from him.

The steps taken by the British Government were briefly these. In the early part of the present century, England was making great efforts for the suppression of the slave-trade in every part of the world where her influence extended. At that time a most extensive trade in slaves existed in Madagascar; and frightful cruelties were caused by the abominable traffic, as has been the case in every place where it has ever prevailed. Sir Robert Farquhar, governor of Mauritius, a humane and benevolent man, was directed by the home government to use every endeavour to suppress the trade; and perceiving that the only certain remedy for the evil was to strike at the root, by stopping the sale of slaves in the country, and not merely to capture the slavers upon the seas, he began to consider the best means of effecting this object. He found that of all the chiefs of the island, Radàma, the king of Imérina, was by far the most influential and enlightened—in fact, he was advancing rapidly to the sole sovereignty of the island. Besides this, he was well-disposed towards a policy of civilising

* See the king's speech to the people, upon the conclusion of the treaty with England abolishing the slave-trade: Appendix D.

and elevating his people, and entertained a high regard for Europeans, and especially for the English nation. Radàma, however, received a great proportion of his revenues from a royalty, paid by the sellers, upon every slave shipped from Madagascar; and many of his most influential subjects also derived great wealth from the trade. The king was aware of the miseries it caused to his subjects, and would gladly have put an end to it. But he could hardly be expected to sacrifice a great part of his own revenue, and run the risk of alienating many of his most powerful adherents, without some equivalent. Sir Robert Farquhar accordingly deputed Mr. James Hastie to negotiate a treaty with the king for the purpose of putting an end to the export of slaves. By unwearied perseverance and industry, Mr. Hastie at last overcame the difficulties in the way, removed the objections and apprehensions of Radàma, and had the gratification of receiving the hearty assent of the king and the people to a treaty abolishing for ever the accursed traffic. It was agreed that, in return for the loss Radàma would sustain by this measure, he should receive an annual payment in money, uniforms, arms, and ammunition from the British Government, amounting in value to about £2000: a small sum, when we consider the greatness of the object attained by its means, and the amount of suffering and loss of life which it entirely suppressed. Amidst much difficulty and opposition, Radàma adhered most faithfully to the agreement he had made. His conduct cannot be too highly applauded, especially when we remember that it was no gain to him personally, and that he had to contend with the prejudices, the inveterate hostility, and the interests of his own family, as well as those of the great body of the chiefs—and indeed of the entire community, except, of course, the unfortunate slaves

themselves. Radàma even allowed the law to take its course upon some of his own relations, who were condemned to death for selling slaves after the treaty had been concluded.

Mr. Hastie had no ordinary difficulties to overcome; but his judicious management and his disinterested benevolent exertions finally overcame all opposition. His endeavours to supply the people with means of material advancement, and of producing wealth by agriculture and trade instead of by trafficking in their countrymen's flesh and blood, were no less commendable. He introduced the culture of many seeds, fruits, and plants formerly unknown to the country; made great exertions to induce the people to cultivate the land more extensively, and to increase the native manufactures; and so to enlarge their resources by the export of these, instead of their former trade in men, women, and children.

Radàma had previously obtained the services of some English non-commissioned officers from Mauritius, to drill his troops, and an army had been organised on the English model, with divisions, brigades, regiments, etc. His treaty with Great Britain of course tended still further to consolidate his power; and the arms and ammunition he obtained enabled him to march a well-equipped force wherever there was any sign of resistance to his authority. Before his death, in 1828, nearly the whole of Madagascar had acknowledged his supremacy, and, except in distant parts of the island, he was able to dispose of the people as he pleased. In the extreme south, however, there are still some tribes who have maintained their independence, and resisted every effort of the Hova troops to reduce their chief town, a place reported to contain 30,000 inhabitants.* The

* See Captain Rooke's "Boat Voyage on the Coast Lakes of East Madagascar" (Royal Geographical Society).

influence of the central government is of course comparatively slight in the remoter parts of Madagascar; still, with the above exception, a nominal submission is paid to the sovereign of Antanànarìvo by all the tribes in the island, and, throughout Madagascar, garrisons of Hova officers and soldiers maintain the authority of the government established at the capital city.

Radàma's dependence upon the army led him to adopt the policy of increasing the military influence and weakening that of the civil officials, the heads of the people, the judges, and other functionaries, whose position was derived from the ancient political arrangements. Public duties of honour and importance—such as bringing the messages of the sovereign to the people, and the like—were given to military officers rather than to civilians, and this exaltation of the army over the non-military class has continued, more or less, unto the present day.

The Malagasy troops are more like a militia force, or the landwehr of the Prussians, than a regular army. They do not receive any pay, unless an occasional gift of a lamba, and about a week's rice during the year, can be called such. Probably more than half, or perhaps nearly two-thirds, of the whole effective male population of the central province are enrolled either as officers or privates. In theory this government service does not appear so unjust as it is in reality, for it is rendered instead of money-taxes, which are very small in amount. But in actual effect it presses very unequally upon the people: for although the drills at ordinary times do not occur more frequently than a day or two every fortnight, much time is taken up in going to and returning from the exercises, in the case of those who live at a distance; and frequently the officers will not allow the men to return to their homes without a

bribe of money—so that the common soldiers can often barely subsist, having hardly any time to cultivate their own rice-fields.

The grades of military rank are reckoned by numbers in the Malagasy army—commencing with one honour for a private soldier, two for a corporal, three for a sergeant, and so on, up to thirteen for a field-marshal of the higher rank. Since the time of Radàma I. additional honours have been awarded for special services, and the highest is now the sixteenth, or *ènin-àmbinifòlo vòninàhitra.* The officers are called *mànam-bòninàhitra, i.e.* "those having honours." The rank of officials in other branches of government service, not strictly military, is also reckoned in the same way; but Malagasy officers differ from those of European armies in being much more numerous in proportion to the rank-and-file. From a third to a fourth of all in the military service are officers; indeed it is said that, in some cases, more officers than men have been sent upon special services. Of the thirteenth rank, or field-marshal (nominally), there are probably two or three hundred, while the lower grades are extremely plentiful. When employing workmen upon buildings, we may have a field-marshal for foreman, a colonel for mason or carpenter, a major for bricklayer, and so on—so that one is tempted to feel little respect for these honours. Above the thirteenth rank the numbers are fewer, and of the highest (the sixteenth) there are not more than half-a-dozen; and this honour is only given to officers of long standing in the service, or of the highest position in the government. The office of commander-in-chief is now held by the prime minister, Ràinilàiarivony.

There are two other classes of officers who must also be mentioned here—the *dekàny*, and the officers of the palace. The former word is a corruption of the French *aide-de-*

camp, and is applied to those officers who are attached to the service and interests of another of superior rank. Except a few of the *mànam-bòninàhitra* of the highest position, almost every officer is connected with another in this way—the prime minister having two or three hundred

OFFICER OF THE PALACE.

of such in his service. These dekàny seem to resemble the clients of a Roman patrician of the Imperial age, rather than the aides-de-camp of a European general. The officers of the palace are, as their name implies, attached to the service of the sovereign, and have a variety of duties to

perform connected with the business of the government. They are aides-de-camp of the queen, and some of their number are in constant attendance at the palace. Upon public occasions they are distinguished by wearing a scarf of crimson or scarlet silk over their uniforms.

Those who are accustomed to think that all non-European armies are undisciplined hordes would be surprised to see the soldierly appearance of Malagasy troops when reviewed or drilled. It is not pretended, of course, that they can be compared with the line regiments of English, French, or other Western nations; their arms, uniform, and discipline are very inferior; but with European officers, they would probably make a very formidable force, much superior to most of our Indian Sepoy regiments. On several occasions, Malagasy soldiers have shown great courage and endurance, even when brought against disciplined troops, notwithstanding all the prestige that a highly-civilised nation has in the eyes of one only partially advanced.

Except at special seasons of the year, when rice-planting and harvesting are in progress, the troops are assembled for drill every fortnight in their respective districts. The largest body meets at Antanànarìvo, and is generally exercised at Imàhamàsina, the plain immediately below the city on the western side. This irregularly square area, about a third of a mile in extent each way, is perfectly level, and forms an excellent space for manœuvring a large body of men. There are seldom fewer than five or six thousand, and frequently double that number, present. From the upper part of the city, the plain presents a very animated and picturesque appearance on a march-day. Imàhamàsina lies spread before us like a map, its fresh greensward, never bare or parched, even during the long dry season, contrasting well with the white uniforms. At

a height of three or four hundred feet above them, little irregularities in lines and columns are unnoticed, and the whole plain, with its surrounding houses and groups of spectators watching the evolutions, can be taken in at a glance.

The troops are generally on the ground by daybreak, and are not dismissed until after midday, and sometimes not until late in the afternoon. Coming out of my house at Imarivolànitra before breakfast, I generally found them formed into an immense hollow square of three or four lines, one within the other. They appeared to be undergoing inspection as to their arms and uniforms before drilling commenced. After some time a variety of simple manœuvres are gone through—forming into columns of companies, marching past, forming squares, etc. Some of these manœuvres are clumsily performed, especially wheeling in line; but it is many years since they had the benefit of an English officer to drill them, and it is surprising that so much has been retained. It was in the year 1816 that Sergeant Brady commenced to organise a regular army on the European model; by dint of unwearied perseverance through many years, he formed a well-disciplined force, in which he held the rank of major-general. Since his death, many years ago, the Malagasy have had no foreign instructors in military tactics; and the discipline now kept up is derived solely from the traditions of General Brady's teaching.

The uniform of the rank-and-file consists of a neat tunic and trousers of white material, with a narrow-brimmed straw-hat, painted white, with crossbelts and cartouche-box. In this simple dress they look soldierlike and effective, but it is only worn when at drill, and at reviews and state ceremonies. They are armed with flint-lock muskets,

of the old "Brown-Bess" type. On special occasions a select body of men are dressed in English scarlet uniforms, with accoutrements and hats similar to those worn by our line regiments. These soldiers act as the bodyguard or household troops of the queen.

But the variety of dress indulged in by the crowd of officers is absurd, and sometimes extremely laughter-provoking. Those of inferior rank sport a variety of old regimental red-coats, pantaloons, and hats of a very antique cut. The higher grades of officers generally appear at drill, not in uniform, but in a full suit of black cloth, with the common black silk hat, in which they look well enough, although not very soldierly; while the rough-looking native sword, carried in the hand without a scabbard, contrasts oddly with the civilian-like dress. On some occasions the regiments turn out in an indescribable variety of costume. Amongst hundreds of persons, hardly two together could be found dressed alike: with coats, trousers, waistcoats, and hats of all colours, shapes, and materials that can be imagined, they make a procession into the city from the parade-ground which has a most ridiculous effect. Had an extensive dealer in secondhand clothes fitted out the whole force, there could not be a greater variety. It must however be observed, that when great ceremonies of state take place, such as the reception of foreign consuls, signing of treaties, etc., the higher officers are dressed in very handsome uniforms. There is great variety, but they are all gorgeous with blue or scarlet cloth and velvet, gold and silver lace and embroidery, feathers and plumes; and when arranged round the palace courtyard, or in the reception-rooms, they present a very striking appearance.

The bandsmen have no uniform, but retain the ordinary native dress of lamba and straw hat. They play military

music with great accuracy, and show plainly that more complete training would make them very creditable musicians. A number of young men were sent over to Mauritius, about fifty years ago, to be instructed in the use of musical instruments. They quickly acquired facility in the use of them, and for many years past a band has been considered as essential a part of every regiment as it is in European armies. A set of band-instruments, in silver, was one of the presents sent by Queen Victoria to Radàma II. at his coronation, and was most highly valued by him. Some of the higher officers keep a number of musicians in their employ, many of whom are able to perform with great ability.

A small artillery corps has been formed, and one or two brass fieldpieces are generally brought on the ground; but the Malagasy are not well versed in the use of large or small firearms, and it is amusing to see how the guns are unlimbered, and every piece of the carriages, wheels, and framework is carried separately to and from the ground. There is no cavalry force in the native army, but some of the superior officers ride on horseback at the reviews.

In the course of the morning of review-days, the queen generally comes out into the balcony of the palace, on the side facing the parade-ground. As soon as the scarlet umbrella is seen under the arched verandah, the bugles call "Attention," the whole body of troops turn to face their sovereign, and after a few bars of the national anthem the salute is given, with shouts of *Traràntitra* (live long)! When general orders are read, or any message from the queen delivered, all the regiments are massed together in a solid square shortly before dispersing, while the commanding-officer communicates the order. It is a curious sight from the upper parts of the town, to see the soldiers disperse

after drill. Line after line breaks up into a mass of separate atoms, and presently the whole plain is covered with the men moving homewards in every direction. And it is no less odd to observe how rapidly the uniforms are taken off, and the ordinary loose lamba of coarse hempen cloth resumed, apparently with a feeling of relief at being freed from the tighter dress. The officers and band do not disperse at the plain, but come up into the city, and make their respects to the queen at the palace-yard before returning home.

It is not a little amusing to hear the English words of command given with a foreign accent, and mixed with Malagasy. When officers of high rank enter the city, I have, on more than one occasion, noticed how the captain on guard at the gateway has drawn up his little detachment of *four* men in line, with shouldered muskets, and as his superiors approach, he shouts out in rapid succession, "Attention," "Present arms," "*Rear rank take open order*," and apparently every other word of command he has ever heard in his life, to do honour to the exalted rank of the officers passing through, while he stands with his sword at the salute. Every officer above a certain rank, on passing through the gate for the first time in the day, is saluted by the guard.

During the years 1865 and 1866 there was much excitement amongst the people of Madagascar, owing to the threatening attitude of the French, and the apprehension that extreme proceedings would be resorted to in order to enforce the hated Lambert treaty. The Malagasy government adopted vigorous measures to increase the numbers and efficiency of the native army, and during the months of June and July, 1866, there was constant drilling and marching, so that all other work was nearly at a standstill. For the space of three weeks the troops were assembled

every day, Sundays not excepted, and the prime minister and chief officers were at Imàhamàsina every day inspecting the men. A great number of those who had been relieved from military duty, on account of age or long service, were again called out, and large numbers of the *bòrizàny*, or civilians, were enrolled. These old soldiers were called *mèna-vàzana*, literally, "red-gums"—an odd designation, probably referring to the toothless condition of old men. It was very difficult to get any exemption from this conscription, and so strict were the orders, that even sick and infirm men were brought upon the ground that they might be actually seen to be unfit for service; and it was reported that many died upon the parade-ground while awaiting inspection.

About the same time also, a picked body of troops, to serve as a guard for the queen, was organised. This regiment is composed of the finest and most intelligent young men of the central province; they are armed with rifles, and all have the honorary rank of major, or the seventh honour. Their uniform differs from that of the line, being composed of a fine linen shirt, with the lamba tightly girded round the waist when on duty, and a straw hat. With European officers to drill and train them, they would form one of the finest regiments to be found in any army. They are entitled the *maràmitra*, *i.e.* "the sharp ones."

The military punishments in the Malagasy army are severe and cruel. They consist of flogging, degradation of rank, imprisonment with or without chains, and, in the case of desertion or cowardice in battle, of the frightful death of burning alive. This was adopted by the soldiers themselves when appealed to by Radàma I. on the subject. In a transport of loyalty they decided that anyone thus disgracing his uniform should suffer this terrible punishment; so that

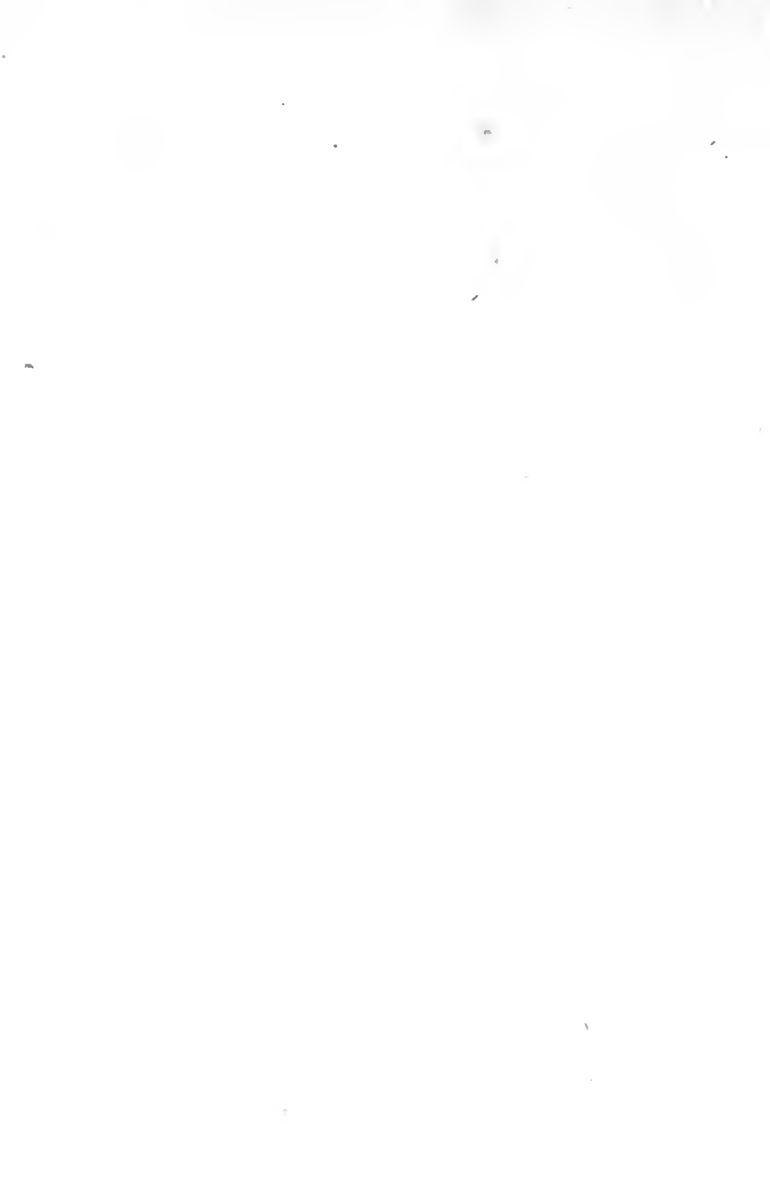
the king, when ordering the law to be put in force, was accustomed to say, "It is not myself that punishes you, but your own law." This is also inflicted in the case of those soldiers who leave their places of residence without leave; and some have actually suffered in this way within the last three or four years. An officer with whom I was on terms of intimacy, had to be present to see this punishment executed upon an unfortunate man for this apparently slight offence. It is to be hoped that the humanising influence of Christianity will soon effect the abolition of this barbarously cruel practice.

The guards who keep watch at the gates of Antanànarìvo seem partly civil and partly military in character and duties. They act as a kind of police in the capital during the night, and have authority to arrest anyone walking in the streets after gunfire. A cannon in the upper part of the city, near the palace, is fired at about half-past nine every evening, as a kind of curfew, after which all good subjects are expected to keep within doors, and to extinguish fires and lights. The latter regulation is not so strictly regarded as the former. The guards are distributed throughout the town, in the courtyards of houses from which they can overlook the roads. They keep up a long drawling cry of "*Zòvy*," *i.e.* "Who goes there?"—literally, "Who?"—all through the night at irregular intervals. European residents are seldom interrupted in going in or out of the gates, even after the gun has fired.

From what has been said in this and preceding chapters as to the origin of the present monarchy of Madagascar, it will be seen that, within the past century, great changes have occurred, which have transferred political power from a number of chiefs into the hands of one, and have transformed the feudal lord of a small town and its

surrounding country into the autocrat of one of the largest islands in the world. In the case of sovereigns of genius and force of character, like Radàma I. and Rànavàlona I., the reins of government were kept to a great extent under their own control; but in less vigorous hands the authority must soon be shared by others who have influence in the counsels, and access to the person, of the king or queen. And so it proved during the latter part of the reign even of Rànavàlona; the members of one family gradually obtained an overwhelming influence and great wealth, and from that time to the present have retained in their hands the chief offices of state, the command of the army, and the virtual control of the government of the country. In the transition-state through which Madagascar has passed, and is still passing, such absorption of power by a few is not to be wondered at, nor perhaps to be regretted, if judiciously exercised. And taking all the circumstances into consideration, and the great temptations such influence involved, it must be confessed that the family of Ràinihàro have, on the whole, used their great influence well and wisely. Ràinihàro and his brother held office under Rànavàlona; and his son Rahàro, afterwards known as Ràinivòninàhitrìniòny, succeeded to much of his father's authority and honours. Upon the death of the queen, in 1861, it was due to his energy and wisdom that Radàma II. was placed upon the throne, and the designs of the reactionary heathen party frustrated. Again, when the young king fell completely under the influence of evil counsellors and licentious habits, and was contemplating measures which would have brought anarchy on his kingdom, the sagacity and courage of Ràinivòninàhitrìniòny and his brother saved the country, although at the cost of the misguided king's life. The late Queen Ràsohèrina was placed

RAHARLA, FORMERLY PRIME MINISTER.



on the throne by him, and something like a pledge of governing constitutionally was required from her before she was acknowledged as the sovereign; and when the prime minister was succeeded in 1864 by his brother Ràinilàiarivony, the commander-in-chief, the same wise and liberal policy was continued. Since then a gradual but cautious advance has been made, treaties have been concluded with the English, French, and American governments, the interests of the country have been promoted, and Christianity has been allowed free exercise without any serious attempt to control it.

All measures of state are usually discussed by a council, consisting of the chief members of the government, and some of the oldest and most experienced officers of the army. But it is said that the decision on important points generally rests with the queen, the prime minister, and some members of his own family, who form an inner council. The influence of English ideas and liking for English institutions is curiously apparent in the names of the highest offices of state. The words "prime minister" and "commander-in-chief" have become naturalised in the language, both offices being now held by Ràinilàiarivony. So also is "secretary of state," the duties of which position are performed by Ràinimàharàvo, a brother of the prime minister. The chief officer of the palace is Ràinàndriàntsilàvo, another brother. The under-secretaryships are filled by two young men, Ràmanìraka and Razànakombàna, son and nephew of Ràhanìraka—a sagacious and accomplished man, educated in England, who long held the post of chief secretary under Rànavàlona. Treaties are generally signed by the secretary of state, by one of the highest military officers, by the chief judge, and by an old chief, who represents the civilians.

At the accession of the late Queen Ràsohèrina, advances were made towards a constitutional government in place of the former custom, which made the will of the sovereign alone to be the law. Conditions were proposed to the new queen, which she accepted; and although these have not been carried out in every respect, yet the very idea of such a thing as the sovereign having duties as well as rights, is a hopeful sign of progress, and cannot but pave the way for further advances. The following extract from a letter written by Mr. Ellis, soon after the revolution in 1863, shows clearly the extent of the advances then made towards constitutional ideas:—"In the course of the forenoon" (following the death of the king) "four of the chief nobles went to the queen with a written paper, which they handed to her as expressing the terms or conditions on which for the future the country should be governed. They requested her to read it, stating that *if she consented* to govern according to these conditions, they were willing that she should be the sovereign of the country, but that if she objected or declined they must seek another ruler. The queen, after reading the document and listening to it, and receiving explanations on one or two points, expressed her full and entire consent to govern according to the plan therein set forth. The nobles then said: 'We also bind ourselves by this agreement. If we break it, we shall be guilty of treason, and if *you break it* we shall do as we have done now.' The prime minister then signed the document on behalf of the nobles and heads of the people, and the queen signed it also."* One of the articles of this paper was:—"The word of the sovereign alone is not to be law, but the nobles and heads of the people, *with the sovereign*, are to make the laws."

Before the rise of the military power in the time of

* See "Missionary Chronicle" for August, 1863.

Radàma I. the chief authority under the king was vested in the *àndriambavènty* (*i.e.* great nobles) or judges. They held the first rank after members of the royal family, heard causes, administered the oath of allegiance, and delivered the messages of the sovereign to the people. Although some of their duties have been transferred to military officers, and their position is not so high as it formerly was, they are still held in much honour, and are regarded with great respect. The judges are appointed by the sovereign, and hold their places during his pleasure, but a son often succeeds his father in office.

The officials next to be mentioned, and immediately under the judges, are the *faràntsa*, "who may be regarded as the civil police of the country. Their duty is to take charge of the money due to the sovereign from fines, taxes, and confiscations; to receive the rice and other productions falling to the sovereign from the land; and, in fact, to undertake the custody of whatever contributions the law requires for the government.

"Another class of civil officers consists of the *vàdintàny*. These are employed as the king's couriers. They carry the messages of the government to the headmen of the villages on all public business, and constitute a sort of general watch, as constables of the peace throughout the country."* In addition to these officials, there are others called *ambònin-jàto*, "over a hundred," or centurions. These are the heralds, and actually deliver the messages to the people, or to the headmen of districts. These messengers deliver the word of the sovereign at the great markets held in the city and its neighbourhood, attention being called by firing a gun to bring the people together. When no market is held, the *vàdintàny* give their instructions to

* "History of Madagascar," vol. i. p. 348.

the chief men of the villages, who afterwards communicate them to the people.

In every village there are *lohòlona*, "heads of people"—generally men of age and influence, who are appointed by the sovereign as magistrates and preservers of public order. They exercise a general control over all the population, and act as representatives of the king or queen in their respective districts.

Before leaving the subject of the political arrangements and divisions of the Malagasy people, there are two other great distinctions amongst them which must be noticed. One of these relates to their occupations, and the other to their birth or race. In the first place, all the people in Ankòva* may be divided into two great classes—the *mià-ramila*, or military, and the *bòrizàny*, or civilians. The first of these names is a compound of two Malagasy words, signifying "united to seek;" the second is a corruption of the French *bourgeoisie*. The difference in outward appearance between these two great divisions, by the use of hats and style of wearing the hair, has already been noticed.†

Then, again, all the people in the central province may be divided into Andrians or nobles, and Hovas or commoners. In one sense all are Hovas by race, as distinguished from the other tribes inhabiting the island, but the word is used in a more limited sense to distinguish those who do not belong to the royal clans or families. It is difficult, in the absence of statistics, to give the relative proportions of the two classes; but perhaps we shall not be

* Ankòva is a compound of the preposition *any*, at, and *Hova*, the name of the tribe inhabiting the most central districts of the island; and signifies, "at the place or country of the Hovas." Ankòva includes Imérina, Imàmo, and Vonizòngo.

† See chapter vii.

far wrong in reckoning the Andrians as a fourth part of the whole free population of Ankòva. In some villages and districts they form the majority of the inhabitants. Notwithstanding the fact that they possess a kind of nobility, there is nothing in their dress, wealth, or social position to distinguish them from the rest of the people. Many of them are very poor indeed, so much so that there is an adage, "As poor as an Andrian." The only matter in which a foreigner would observe a distinction is in the salutation addressed to them, which differs from that used in speaking to a person not of the rank of Andrian. The family of the prime minister are not noble by birth, but are simply Hovas.

The administration of the law in Madagascar is in the hands of the judges, who act as the representatives of the sovereign, and dispense justice both in civil and criminal cases. Until the reign of Rànavàlona there appears to have been no code of laws to appeal to, but the decisions were given as appeared right and just to the Andriambavènty, great regard being always paid to precedents and the ancient customs of their ancestors. And as a written character was unknown until the coming of the Protestant missionaries in 1819, no judges could either read or write until several years after that date. In the year 1828, after education had extended, and the advantages of writing became recognised, a body of laws was drawn up, and the penalties for various offences minutely specified. These were carefully proportioned to the magnitude of the crime, but all seem severe, and the punishment in money-fines excessive; but this was a great advance upon the former customs, which inflicted death for almost every offence. We can hardly, however, be astonished at the Malagasy when we remember the cruel character of our own criminal

code until a very recent period. By the influence and advice of Mr. Hastie, Radàma I. was induced to substitute lighter punishments for the severe ones formerly inflicted, and no increase of crime resulted from the change.

Further improvements have since been made in the code, and several additions and alterations effected in the reign of Ràsohèrina. All statements are taken down in writing, and sent for the inspection of the sovereign, and in important cases, sentences are submitted to the queen for approval before being pronounced upon the offender. Courts of justice are held in the open air, generally on a vacant space of ground close to the main road leading from the city to Ambàtonakànga and the north and west. The origin of the custom of sitting *sub Jove*, is said to be the following:—"Formerly, the judges met to hear causes, deliberate, and administer justice in a house, not exposed to the gaze of the rude or curious. On one occasion, however, not many years since, the king was passing by the house where the judges were assembled, when the latter omitted to rise and pay his majesty the usual tokens of homage—either not seeing, or pretending not to see, the king. Radàma, tenacious of respect, and believing with a Spanish monarch that 'no ceremony should be deemed a trifle, since the king himself is but a ceremony,' resolved that those 'who could see and would not, should be made to see,' and accordingly ordered the house to be instantly taken down, directing that in future all causes should be tried and awards given *sub die*, in broad daylight, that the administration of justice might be open, and no one find excuse for not paying due respect to majesty."*

The Malagasy seem prone to litigation, and disputes about the division of the property of deceased relatives

* "History of Madagascar," vol. i. p. 101.

are rather frequent. In speaking of their courts of justice, we must dismiss entirely from our minds the idea of dignified judges in scarlet and ermine and voluminous wigs, of robed barristers and "intelligent" jurymen. A Malagasy court presents a very much simpler appearance, and is wanting in almost all that outward dignity which marks the administration of justice in Europe. The judges are in no way distinguished by their dress from ordinary people. They usually sit on a raised bank of earth or stone, with the disputants, witnesses, and spectators crowding around, and standing in the roadway watching the proceedings. The depositions are generally written with the paper laid upon the knee. No advocates are employed; everyone pleads his own cause, and cross-questions the witnesses for and against him. Evidence is carefully scrutinised, witnesses are examined in the presence of each other, and the sentence given according to the weight of testimony offered. In difficult cases, the judges retire to consider their sentence, and, until seven or eight years ago, the ordeal of the tangèna was sometimes employed to decide the guil or innocence of accused persons. This, in criminal cases, was administered to the party accused; but in lighter offences, two fowls or dogs, representing the accuser and the accused, were submitted, and according to the effect produced the decision was pronounced. This superstitious practice is now a thing of the past; for by the treaty concluded with the British Government in 1865, the use of the poison-ordeal for any purpose was for ever abolished in the island.

On public occasions of state-ceremonial, the judges are usually dressed in the flowing lamba of dark-red silk with handsome striped borders of brighter colours. They generally wear also a black silk hat of French or English make.

In the paper presented to the late Queen Ràsohèrina for acceptance, before she was invested with royal power, amongst other provisions was the following clause :—" No person is to be put to death for any offence by the word of the sovereign alone ; and no one is to be sentenced to death, till twelve men have declared such person to be guilty of the crime to which the law awards the punishment of death." It is difficult to tell by whose suggestion such a stipulation was inserted in the new constitution; probably some of the officers had heard of trial by jury being considered as a great safeguard of English liberty, and they desired that it should be extended to Madagascar. I never heard of its being actually adopted in any case, but it is an interesting fact that such a provision should have been made for the better carrying-out of justice, and is another testimony to the admiration of the intelligent part of the people for English institutions. Perhaps the introduction of trial by jury would not be advisable until education and Christianity have more fully leavened Malagasy society, but we may hope that it will at some future day become an essential part of their constitution.

The punishments awarded for crime in Madagascar are severe, and sometimes very barbarous. Amongst them may be enumerated flogging, more or less severely, loading with chains—in some cases consisting of long and heavy bars, in others of rings only—at the wrists, neck, and ankles. Imprisonment is but rarely used ; criminals in chains being obliged to labour for the government in making roads and other works, and to support themselves either by their own industry, or by the help of their friends. In ordinary cases the bars are not so heavy as to prevent them doing work or walking about, although awkwardly. The punishment of maiming, by cutting off the hands and feet, was

formerly inflicted for certain crimes. Money-fines are frequently imposed, especially for damages done by stray cattle, and also for petty thefts. For political offences, and also for nonpayment of debts, persons are often sold into slavery; and sometimes the wife and children are included, and the offender's, or debtor's, land and other property is sequestrated.

Death is inflicted for many crimes, and in a variety of modes. Spearing is the most common—the criminal being thrown on the ground, and spears driven into the back. Beheading and stoning are also practised, and flogging to death, crucifixion, and burning alive, have also been resorted to in extreme cases, while for sorcery, throwing down a steep rock is the usual punishment. Most of these terrible forms of death were inflicted upon Christians during the long persecution under Rànavàlona, and even new modes of lingering torture were invented to terrify the people from joining in the new belief. In the case of nobles or members of the higher ranks of Andrians, it was pretended that it was unlawful to shed their blood; and death by smothering, by starvation, and by burning, was adopted to remove those who were obnoxious to the remorseless queen. The late King Radàma was despatched by strangling with a silken cord.

Until a very recent period, persons detected in the act of stealing in the public markets by cutting off the corner of the lamba, in which money is usually tied up, were mobbed by the populace, and killed without any trial. This is now illegal, but the following instance of its exercise came under my own observation in the early part of 1866. One market-day I happened to call at the house of the Rev. J. Pearse, at Anàlakèly. My friend's residence is situated on the slope of the hill ascending to Fàravòhitra, and

opposite the rising ground called Zomà, where the great weekly market is held. Between the two elevations is a level piece of grassy plain, where cattle are exposed for sale, and the city guards frequently exercised. As we were talking together, we noticed a number of men and boys running in and out amongst the houses and walls surrounding them, on the opposite slopes near the market; but we did not pay much attention to them, thinking they were engaged in some game. Presently we noticed a man crossing the level ground, and come running past the courtyard of Mr. Pearse's house, up a narrow lane between high walls, leading to the main road to the north. He seemed panting and exhausted, and was followed by a number of people of the lowest class. Wondering what could be the meaning of this, we called to some of the servants, and asked what was the matter. They replied that the man had been stealing in the market by cutting a lamba, and that the people were going to kill him. As the Malagasy frequently use the word *mamòno*, "kill," for punishing or beating only, we told them to run and see that they did not use him too severely, not imagining that they would use such violence as to endanger life. We heard shouting and noise immediately afterwards, and presently the servants came back, exclaiming, *Màty izy*—"He's dead." Horrified by the news, we rushed off to see if it were really so, and a hundred yards from the house we found the poor fellow lying on the ground, bruised and bleeding, completely naked, surrounded by a crowd who had been stoning him. They desisted as we came up, and the ringleaders ran off. We found the man was still breathing, so I ran off to the hospital to see if Dr. Davidson would receive him, and try if anything could be done. He immediately sent one of his assistants and some bearers

with a palanquin to bring the unfortunate man. We took him up and bore him to the building, followed by an immense crowd of people. The doctor, after examination, found him severely injured, and to have narrowly escaped with life; had we been many seconds later, he would probably have been killed outright. We soon afterwards sent word to the queen, informing her of what we had done; and on the following day we received a message from her majesty, thanking us for our care for the life of one of her subjects, though a criminal, and assuring us that she fully understood that what we did was from humanity, and not from any wish to screen those who deserved punishment. We then found that such summary proceedings were no longer legal, and that all offenders ought to be taken before the judges.

Another personal experience may also be added, to illustrate that dread of interference with justice, and the indifference to suffering, which characterise so large a portion of the Malagasy people. An extract from a letter written home soon afterwards, will give a more vivid idea than any description written from recollection alone: "We had a strange adventure this day week. On the Friday afternoon some of the Amparibé people came and told Mr. Parrett that a man was lying bound with ropes, almost dead, in a stream of water at the bottom of a valley between this place and Fàravòhitra. We sent our servants to fetch him, but they dared not touch him, as he might have been a prisoner, and it is unlawful to do anything to release one. However, we determined to do what we could, as they said he had been lying there two or three nights, and on the previous evening there had been torrents of rain. We saw an officer of the palace, and he said we had better not do anything, as we might get into trouble; but as we said we

would be responsible, he promised to speak to the prime minister about it. We took our servants and a palanquin, and went down into the hollow. There the poor fellow was, lying in a little stream of water which must have been quite a river the night before. His arms were tightly bound behind his back by ropes, which had cut through the flesh in several places, the hands all mortified, and the skin peeling off and partly eaten by dogs, yet alive. Although there were houses within a few yards' distance, yet no one had dared to raise him up, much less remove the cords. Some one, certainly, had put some rice into his mouth. It made one's heart bleed to see such a sight. I soon cut the cords, and we put him in the palanquin, and brought him up to our place. We made a comfortable bed in our cook-house, washed him, gave brandy and broth, and sent for the doctor. This was at about half-past three in the afternoon. He revived and talked to our servants, but at seven in the evening he died, we suppose from exhaustion. Our men buried him the next morning. We could not ascertain for certain whether he was a criminal or not. We heard that he was a stranger from a distance, who had come up here and met some men to whom he owed money; they seized him, stripped him of his money and clothes, and bound him, and he wandered about until he fell into the place where we discovered him. Whether this is true or not we cannot tell. To-day an officer of the palace came down to us with a message from the queen, thanking us for our kindness to one of her people, and saying that she knew that our motives were upright, and not opposed to her government; and approving of what we had done. It is a strange episode in Madagascar life, but may give you some idea of the mixture of cruelty and indifference to suffering that exists in semi-idolatrous countries. Compassion, kindness,

and their kindred virtues are the blessed fruits of the gospel of 'goodwill to men.'"

In hearing such accounts, we may be tempted to exclaim against the barbarism and cruelty of the people, but it would not be just to condemn them indiscriminately. Numbers of kind and humane persons would shrink as much as ourselves from complicity in such acts. Nor when we remember the outrages committed by English and American mobs in our own times, and the brutalities suffered formerly by those who were pilloried, need we be astonished that a half-civilised and Christianised people still retain so much that is opposed to our practice of forbearance and kindness even to criminals.

The influence of Christian teaching is rapidly infusing new ideas of humanity and respect for human life. At the deposition of the late prime minister, the offences which led to his disgrace would, a few years previously, have caused his summary execution, and perhaps involved his wives and children in slavery and disgrace. Instead of this, his rank and offices only were taken away, but his life and property were spared; and he was sent to a village a few miles from the capital, and kept under restraint of a very mild description. More recently, the humanising influence of Christian ideas has been shown in a still more striking manner. Shortly before the death of Queen Ràsohèrina, in April, 1868, an attempt was made to change the order of succession, and to put another relative of the queen upon the throne instead of her cousin, the rightful heir. Those engaged in this plot went so far as to seize the palace in her majesty's absence, and to bind some of those who were in charge of the building. The attempt failed utterly, and the whole of those concerned were arrested and tried. At any former period no hesitation would have been felt in

putting them all to death immediately; but merciful counsels prevailed, and, after much deliberation, imprisonment was substituted, and not one of the conspirators suffered the extreme penalty of the law. This result was largely due to the influence exerted by the English missionaries and M. Laborde, the French consul, upon the prime minister.

It is difficult for a foreigner, without long experience, to pronounce very decisively upon the justice or otherwise of the general administration of the laws; but, as far as can be learned in a three or four years' residence, there seems a great amount of practical contentment with their operation. Still, there can be little doubt that a good deal of corruption exists on the part of the judges, that bribes of money and other considerations will materially affect the decisions given, and that the longest purse will probably win the day. The judges have no salary from the government, and a very large sum is said to have been offered by the chief judge for a continuance in his position. It is evident, therefore, that the suitors have to pay, and this state of things must continue until a general advance in intelligence, in public morals, and right feeling enforces the obligation of purity in those who are the ministers of justice.

The Malagasy government has not as yet any representatives at European courts, but a British subject at Port Louis acts as their agent at Mauritius; and consuls accredited by the British, French, and United States Governments are resident at Tamatave and the capital. Mr. T. C. Pakenham, our own representative, usually resides at Tamatave, as does also the English vice-consul, and Major Finkelmeier, the American agent. M. Laborde, who is consular agent for the French Government, has been a resident for many years at Antanànarìvo, and was high in

favour with Queen Rànavàlona on account of the services he rendered in teaching various manufactures to her people. In the year 1836, during the reign of William IV., an embassy was sent to England and France; and again in 1863, when two officers were sent to the same countries to arrange disputes between their own and the French Government.

In 1865, a commercial treaty with England was signed at Antanànarìvo. Its stipulations, however, do not refer exclusively to matters of trade, for several of the clauses bear honourable testimony to the humanity and regard for the real welfare of the Malagasy which actuated those who framed it. Abolition of the poison-ordeal, perfect religious liberty for Europeans and natives, and protection for the memorial churches and all buildings for Christian worship, are amongst its provisions.* A treaty with the United States Government was completed in 1867, but it is purely commercial, and does not even provide for the right of American subjects to erect places for their own worship. In 1869, a treaty with France was arranged; and although the French did not obtain all they contended for, yet in their treaty all restriction of French subjects from the sacred cities are removed. This of course, under the usual "most favoured nation" clause, is equally applicable to British subjects. The Malagasy law does not allow any foreigner to purchase land in the country, but ground may be rented on lease by giving notice to the government. This jealous feeling has arisen, in a great measure, from the long-continued schemes of the French to obtain territory in the island, and partly also from what they have heard as to the gradual rise of British power in India and the East.

The nation is now passing through a crisis. Old super-

* See Appendix H.

stitions are being exploded, idolatry is rapidly sinking into contempt, knowledge is advancing, and Christianity gaining great influence in the capital and over the whole central province. Young Madagascar is disposed to advance, to put away the childish follies of heathenism, and is looking forward to a time of power and influence for the country. At such a time the nation ought to have good counsellors. A wise, sagacious, and patriotic man as British resident at the capital, to counsel the native government how to act, and to point out the way to make true progress, by skilfully engrafting European institutions upon their own, would doubtless be of great service to the country. But it would probably now be impossible, through the jealousy of other European Powers, for anyone to hold such a position as Mr. Hastie held in the time of the first Radàma. Happily, however, the present prime minister has shown that he has in a great degree a right understanding of the times in which he holds such great power and influence as virtual ruler of Madagascar. Under his wise leadership the country has made great advances, has vindicated its independence against foreign interference, and has thrown away the traditions of heathenism. The future of the country is bright with promise; should no retrograde movement take place—and this seems, humanly speaking, highly improbable—we may look forward to Madagascar soon taking an honourable position amongst civilised and Christian nations.

CHAPTER XI.

MALAGASY ROYALTY AND ETIQUETTE—STATE CEREMONIALS AND FESTIVITIES.

Ranks of Andrians or nobles—Reverence for royalty—Sovereign held to be God's vicegerent and high-priest—State and pomp attending royalty—Salutations—Royal dress—Extravagant adulation—Incident at ambassador's funeral—Respect paid to royal property—One part of capital forbidden—Modes of swearing allegiance—The spear "hating lies"—Change of name, and sanctity of royal name—Similar custom in allied races—Presentation at court—Personal appearance of Queen Ràsohèrina—Picnic with royalty—Queen's gardens at Mahàżoarìvo—Stone house—New year's festival, or Fandròana—Presents by people—Zomà—Bonfires—Jaka—Royal bathing—Mourning for deceased relatives—Killing of bullocks—Ancient customs—Sprinkling blood on doorways—Holiday-making—Eating jaka at the palace—Queen's visit to Ambòhimànga—Strict guard at capital—State entry into Antanànarìvo—Pollution of palace by a corpse—Criminals pardoned if they see the sovereign—Royal revenues.

IN a preceding chapter (vi.) on the sacred cities of Imérina, we saw how Andrian-impòin-Imérina, the chief of Antanànarìvo, made himself master of the central province and other parts of the island; and the steps by which his son Radàma gained the virtual sovereignty of Madagascar have been detailed in speaking of the rise of the military power and the present political arrangements of the country. We need not therefore here repeat the genealogy of the present reigning family, except in so far as may be necessary to understand something of the different royal tribes or clans. We have not yet noticed these divisions of rank in the Andrians or nobles. They consist of six different grades, who take precedence according to their nearness or remoteness of connection

with the family of the reigning monarch, in the following order:—

1. The Queen's immediate relatives.
2. Zànak' Àndriamàsinavàlona.
3. Zàzamàrolàhy.
4. Zànak'ambòny.
5. Zàfinandrìandranàndo.
6. Zànadralàmbo.

The last of these are the descendants of Ralàmbo, the chief of Ambòhitrabiby, who first discovered that beef was good to eat. The Zànak'ambòny are descended from those who accompanied Andrianjàka in the expedition which resulted in the capture of Antanànarìvo. As a reward for their services he conferred upon them this pompous title, which signifies "sons of the above," or "sons of high rank." The principal village of this clan is Ambòhipihàinana, a place about eight miles distant from the capital. The Zanak-Àndriamàsinavàlona are descended from the renowned chief who reduced the greatest part of Imérina under his authority. They are the highest rank of nobles, being accounted of royal blood, and can intermarry with the royal family, besides possessing some other privileges. No class of Andrians can intermarry with Hovas, nor can males of a lower grade marry women of the higher ranks of the nobility.

Royalty in Madagascar is regarded with a profound, an almost idolatrous veneration. The people do indeed believe in the "divine right of kings," and in a "divinity that doth hedge" them. This extreme reverence for the sovereign has been probably much increased in modern times by the wonderful accession of power and wealth to their rulers; but the Malagasy seem always to have had a great respect for law and authority. They are an order-loving and authority-obeying people, and fully appreciate the benefits of government, even if it should be arbitrarily exercised.

Malagasy sovereigns are regarded as the vicegerents and representatives of God upon earth. When appearing in public they are saluted by chaunts of "*Andriamànitra lehibè ny mpanjàkanày*,"—"A great God is our sovereign;" and a common appellation of the king or queen is, "*Ny Andriamanitra hita màso*"—"The God seen by the eye," the visible Divinity; while a common saying asks "For who is God below the sky? Is not the sovereign?" The union of divine and human authority in one person gives therefore an awful sanction to royalty, and makes disobedience to its will a sacrilege as well as a crime. The Asiatic origin of the people seems to have brought with it something of that deep-felt veneration for a king which was so manifest in the Persian, Assyrian, and Babylonian monarchies, and which even rooted itself in the sacred writings of the Jewish nation. Such proverbs as, "The wrath of a king is as messengers of death," "In the light of a king's countenance there is life," "The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion, but his favour is as dew upon the grass," and similar expressions, seem most just and appropriate to the Malagasy mind. A striking illustration of this feeling was given by one of the workmen in the government employ, who, when Rànavàlona's proclamation had been issued prohibiting Christianity, asked some of the Europeans if they could eat their food from consternation and fear. On being answered that, however much they regretted the course the queen had pursued, they were only conscious of having done good, and consequently did not fear, the man observed: "Perhaps you are not aware that we can do nothing of which the queen does not approve; we know of no higher power, and therefore when she is displeased we are people soon dead."*

* "History of Madagascar," vol. ii. p. 503.

The sovereign is also the high-priest of the nation, and by him the few sacrifices which their idolatry enjoins, are presented on behalf of the kingdom. At the new year's festival a bullock is killed, prayers and thanksgivings are presented by the king or queen over the carcase of the animal, and blessings supplicated from the idols and the royal ancestors during the coming year. The late Queen Ràsohèrina, though an idolator, disapproved of the blasphemous ascriptions of divine honour addressed to herself, and forbade their use when she was carried in procession through the city. This fact is but one of many showing the indirect influence of Christianity even upon the heathen portion of the community, and the effect it was even then producing in breaking down former superstitions.

The sovereigns of Madagascar do not appear very frequently in public, but whenever they do show themselves to their subjects, there is a large retinue of soldiers, nobles, great officers, and attendants of various kinds, amounting to several hundreds in number. The late queen was accustomed occasionally to spend a few hours at one or other of her country residences in the neighbourhood of the city—either at the summer-house on the lake to the west of Antanànarìvo, or at the pleasant gardens of Mahàzoarìvo, a mile or two to the south-east. Seen from the upper parts of the hill, these processions of military and other attendants presented a very pretty and lively scene. A long line of soldiers in their white uniforms, with a band, preceded the officers and nobles, who were borne in their palanquins by their slaves, and frequently accompanied by their wives and daughters: the lower ranks first, and those of higher position last, with the members of the government and the prime minister immediately before the queen. Her majesty was generally borne in a kind of large easychair,

covered with scarlet cloth and gold embroidery; over her was carried the constant accompaniment of royalty, a large scarlet umbrella, which is always held over the sovereign when out-of-doors.* Scarlet is the royal colour in Madagascar, and to be shaded from the sun by an umbrella of this kind is the prerogative of royalty alone, as is also the wearing of a lamba entirely of this brilliant hue. The house where a royal corpse lies in state is also draped from ridge to ground with scarlet cloth. While taking the air of an afternoon in the spacious balconies of the palace, the presence of the queen was immediately discovered, even at a great distance, by the brilliant little spot of colour over her majesty's head. When walking in the courtyard of our house at Imarivolànitra, overlooking the plain to the west, I have frequently heard a succession of shouts come up faintly from the small markets held here and there at the base of the city, perceiving at the same time a slight movement of the people turning to the palace. Looking towards the arched balconies of the great Manjàka Miàdana, I could perceive the scarlet umbrella, denoting the presence of royalty. When this was seen the people in sight turned to their queen, and with a low reverence shouted out the salutation, "*Trarantitra, tòmpokovàvy!*"—"Live long, sovereign lady!" In her progresses through the city the queen was surrounded by a guard of soldiers, and followed by a number of her personal attendants, both men and women who kept up a strange barbaric kind of chant in praise of their sovereign, with clapping of hands and beating of drums, and sometimes the blowing of large conch-shells. In travelling to places at a short distance, the queen was often attired in the ordinary dress of the people,

* So also in the ancient Assyrian monarchy, as shown by the Nineveh sculptures.

the simple white or striped lamba thrown over the under-dress, and generally with elegant gold ornaments fastened in her hair; but when returning from a distance, and making a state entry into the city, she was always handsomely robed in silk or satin dresses—sometimes with an embroidered mantle of scarlet or white silk, with a coronet of gold on her head.

kalàva, state dress. Hovas, undress.

MALAGASY SOLDIERS.

The populace of Madagascar do not greet their king or queen with shouts and hurrahs like the Europeans; but as they approach, the women and children commence a low monotonous but not unpleasing chant, recounting the

titles and descent of the sovereign, and ascribing almost divine honours. In addressing the queen, the subject-matter of the speech is always prefaced and interspersed with a number of set phrases, pretty uniform in character, of compliment and congratulation: extravagant and hyperbolical as they appear to us, they are yet in strict accordance with the exalted ideas the people have of royalty. The most common of these are the following:—"Traràntitra hianào, tòmpokovàvy, àza maròfy; mifànatèra àminy ambàny ny lanitrà;" that is, "May you live long, sovereign lady, not suffering affliction! May you equal in length of days the 'under the heaven,'" *i.e.* the entire people! Then follows a recital of the ancestry of the queen as the representative of Radàma I., Andrian-impoina, Ralàmbo, and the line of ancient kings, all of whom are said to consecrate and confirm her right to the succession and the throne. The Supreme Being, under the name of Andriamànitrà Andrianànahàry, "the fragrant, the creating prince," is invoked to bless; together with the twelve sovereigns, the twelve sacred towns of Imérina, the sun, moon, and stars, and the chief idols, mentioned by name. Whatever may be done by the queen is declared to be "sweet," to be "pleasant," to be "*swallowed*" by her subjects, who dare not venture to "challenge the sun," for so is she styled. Servile as all this sounds to our English ears, it does not, after all, exceed the sycophancy and the extravagant abasement of the subject, and laudation of the sovereign, which were common in addressing our own kings and queens of the Tudor and Stuart families.

At kabàrys, or national assemblies, almost every speech is prefaced by some complimentary sentences of the kind just described, at the end of which the speaker, with a graceful inclination of the body, and with hands stretched

out and raised from the ground as if making an offering, bows towards the palace, as if actually seen by the sovereign. This is also done at distant places, quite out of sight of the capital and its towering palaces; and at public dinners and festivities, when the health of the queen is drunk, the guests rise and turn in the direction of Antanànarìvo, while saluting her with wishes of long life. Reversing the European order, the subordinate toasts come first, the health of the queen being drunk last, and concluding the entertainment.

A curious instance of the respect for royalty occurred at the funeral of the Comte de Louvières, the French commissioner for negotiating a treaty with the Malagasy government. Most of the Europeans resident in the capital followed the corpse of the deceased nobleman as it was carried from the Roman Catholic chapel, after a requiem mass, to be buried in the country, about three miles from the city. The procession was escorted by a native band, and a detachment of Malagasy officers and soldiers. On arriving at the crest of the hill and in sight of the palace, three or four hundred yards distant, the officer in charge giving the word of command, we all had to alight from our palanquins, remove our hats, and put down our sunshades; the soldiers presenting arms, while he shouted, "Ràsohèrina the queen, sovereign of the land, live long, not suffering affliction!" etc. Resuming our seats, we descended the rugged path, and wound along a road skirting the base of the city; and when immediately opposite the palace, before turning directly east, the same ceremony was repeated and the salute given, although the queen was not visible.

When travelling within sight of the palace, if the scarlet umbrella is seen in the verandah, it is only respectful to put down our own sunshades until it is hidden from view by rising ground, or even by buildings intervening. It is

also considered a kind of petty treason to fire a gun in the direction of the palace, even if many miles distant from the city; and the discharging of firearms in Antanànarìvo or its neighbourhood is also prohibited, both to natives and foreigners. This extreme reverence for the persón of the queen extends also to all articles belonging to her, or intended for her use. It is considered highly indecorous to stand or sit upon packages containing any royal property, or any presents sent to her. In passing through the city one is often obliged to stay until the bearers of such property have passed by. This observance appears to a stranger no less annoying than absurd. Riding quietly along one of the chief streets, we are suddenly startled by hearing shouts of *Mitanilà, mitanilà!*—"Turn aside, turn aside!" the last syllable alone being distinguishable. Looking ahead, we see the people moving to each side of the road, which is quite cleared of passengers, everyone reverently removing his hat. The cause of this sudden clearance is a small procession, consisting of a man going first with a spear, preceding servants carrying articles suspended from bamboos on their shoulders, and followed by another spear-bearer, and this is all: but the articles belong to the queen; and whether the procession consists of one servant or a score, bearing water-jars, or earthen pots, or goods fastened up in packages, the same respect is paid; and a Malagasy daring to cross the path, or pass near the bearers, would run the risk of feeling the spears of the guard. Even the queen's bullocks are treated with the same respect, and hats are doffed as if their royal owner were in sight. Europeans generally disregard most of these formalities; but when riding it is not wise to force the native bearers to proceed until the royal property has passed by.

Great as the powers of royalty are in Madagascar, there is one part of the capital where none of the royal family, nor even the sovereign, dare intrude. This forbidden district is near Àndohàlo, on the road leading from the centre of the city to Fàravòhitra and the north. The restriction is said to have arisen from the following circumstance. When Andrianjaka, one of the ancestors of the present reigning family, gained possession of Antanànarìvo, he attacked the town at its most accessible point, the north, and from thence drove its chief to the north-east, where he was killed. The people, when surrendering, stipulated that none of the conqueror's family should ever intrude upon the spot where their chief fell, and the custom has been strictly adhered to until this day, as a sacred obligation. Tradition and custom have great force in Madagascar. It is considered by the mass of the people, that to say such-and-such a practice is *fanàon' dràzana*, "custom of the ancestors," is equivalent to the strongest argument for its wisdom and propriety. I have often wondered at the respect which the mere utterance of the words *fanjakàn' andrìana* (*i.e.* "kingdom of the queen," meaning government business), by any officer or public servant, always produced upon the people. It may be, and doubtless often is, used by overbearing officials for their own private advantage; but no one would dare to offer any opposition to those who represented the fountain of all honour and power in the kingdom.

Strangers from all parts of the island are constantly coming to the capital to bring presents from the chiefs of distant tribes, and to present tribute to the sovereign and take the oath of allegiance. There are two modes of performing this last ceremony: one is called *milèfon' òmby*, "spearing the bullock;" and the other *mivèly ràno*, "striking

the water." The first of these is the most solemn, and is generally used on very important occasions, such as the accession of a new sovereign; and by nobles, officers of high rank, and chiefs of tribes. A calf is killed, the head and tail are cut off, and their positions reversed,—the fore legs being also put where the hind ones were, and the hind legs in the place of the fore ones. The carcase is then cut open, and spears are stuck into the yet warm flesh. The chiefs, nobles, and others to be sworn, take hold of the spears, while one of the judges administers the oath, which contains the usual allusions to all that is considered sacred by the old idolatrous customs,—the twelve sovereigns, the twelve sacred mountains, heaven and earth, the idols, and Andriamanitra. The form of oath includes terrible imprecations upon those who may perjure themselves by acknowledging any other sovereign, praying that they may be "as this mangled bullock." A number of tedious repetitions are used to give binding force, and at the conclusion all express their assent by shaking or striking the spears violently into the carcase of the animal as a solemn ratification of the oath. At the accession of the present queen, Rànavàlona II., about a hundred and fifty of the principal nobles and officers were sworn by this ceremony. In addition to the above, a small quantity of water mixed with earth taken from the tomb of one of the former kings is sometimes taken as a further pledge of loyalty.

The ceremony of "striking the water" is used on less solemn occasions, and by the lower ranks of the people. Formerly, a small pool at Antsàhatsiròa, a hollow in the hill not far from the palace, was used for the purpose; but on recent occasions, a canoe half filled with water, and placed at the north-west corner of Andohàlo, has been substituted. With this water a number of articles are

mixed—certain kinds of flowering grass, chaff, bullock's dung, leaves of a tree, some gun-wadding, etc. These things appear to symbolise, by their worthlessness, the condition to which all who perjure themselves become liable. After the oath and imprecations have been recited by the judge, as in the bullock-spearing, the parties to be sworn strike the water with boughs, or with a spear, and sometimes shake the canoe, as a confirmation of their intention to be true to the oath, and to acknowledge no sovereign but the one then reigning. For a considerable time after the accession of a new king or queen, a canoe stands at this spot, and is filled with water mixed with earth taken from a royal tomb; and all persons passing for the first time dip their finger into the water, touching with it the tongue and the crown of the head.

When anyone has become obnoxious to the sovereign, or is accused of treason, officials are sent to the house of the guilty party, bearing with them a large spear with silver blade and shaft, upon which is engraved the name of the queen, and the words *tsi tìa laìngia*, *i. e.* "hating lies." From these words it takes its name, which is applied also to those who carry it. On arriving at the accused person's house, the spear is fixed in the ground in front of the door, and no one dare go in or out of the house until the trial takes place. The *tsi-tìa-laìngia* is also carried by the *vàdintàny*, or native police, when they deliver messages from the government to the people, and is a symbol and guarantee of the authority with which they are invested. On the accession of a new sovereign, a spear of this kind is sent to the governors of the various towns throughout the country, as a confirmation of the office they hold—a kind of warrant for the continued exercise of their authority.

There is a curious custom, which may here be mentioned,

in connection with the name borne by the sovereign. It is usual for a new name to be assumed at their accession: thus Rabòdo became Rànavàlona I.; Rakòto took his father's name, and was styled Radàma II.; his wife Rabòdo became queen as Ràsohèrina; while her cousin Ramòma, the present sovereign, was proclaimed as Rànavàlona II. In the case of the late queen, *sohèrina* is the Malagasy word for the silkworm moth; but having been assumed as a name by the sovereign, the word henceforth becomes in a manner sacred, and may no more be used for the insect, which is now called *zàna' dàndy*, "offspring of the silk."

It appears that this custom is not confined to the sovereign, but was formerly common to all influential chiefs; for in visiting a large lake called Itàsy, about fifty miles to the west of the capital, in the autumn of 1866, we found a similar observance with regard to the feudal lord of the district. His name was Andriamàmba. Now, *màmba* is the native word for "crocodile," but being appropriated by their chief it would be highly disrespectful to him to call the reptile which swarms in the lake by the same name, and it is now known as *voháy*. This custom appears to be common to many, if not all, the divisions of the great Malayo-Polynesian family of peoples. In Tahiti, if any one assumed the name of the sovereign, it exposed the offender to the risk of capital punishment; and so strict was the prohibition, that if there was a slight resemblance only between a subject's name and the king's, the former must be abandoned. This proscription extended also to the whole of the royal clan, and to the principal chiefs; so that if any syllable of their names resembled that of a plant or an animal, the latter must be changed, in order to avoid the desecration. It is evident, therefore, that the languages of such peoples must be in a constant

state of change, and in a few generations would be considerably altered; but from the much greater extent of Madagascar, the Malagasy tongue would be less affected by such causes than are the languages of the small Polynesian islands; and with one sovereign over the whole country, the effect will of course become less noticeable. The Sàkalàvas on the western coast have the same custom. "From this cause," Mr. Hastie wrote, "the names of rivers, places, and things, have suffered so many changes on the western coast, that frequent confusion occurs; for after being prohibited by their chieftains from applying any particular words in their accustomed signification, the natives will not acknowledge to have ever known them in their former sense."*

However absolute the sovereignty of Madagascar may have been in the reigns of Radàma I. and Rànavàlona I., it has, since the death of the latter, become much more of a limited monarchy, and been put under some restrictions of governing according to the laws, and in conjunction with the will of the chief nobles and officers and heads of the people. Except upon great occasions, and when appearing in public, the queen lives in a comparatively simple manner, and without much outward state and ceremony. The great palaces are used chiefly for receptions and state banquets, and one of the small houses in the royal courtyard is her ordinary residence. All food prepared for her use is tasted by others, to prevent the possibility of treachery by poison, and elaborate precautions are taken to ensure her personal safety.

A few extracts from journal letters, describing some of the state ceremonies during the reign of Queen Ràsohèrina, will perhaps give a more vivid idea than any further

* See "Tyerman and Bennet's Voyages," p. 276.

description would do of the outward aspects and surroundings of royalty in Madagascar.

From the small number of European residents in the capital, consisting only of the members of the Protestant and Roman Catholic missions, and the French consul and his secretaries, the arrival of any foreigner is a somewhat important event, and a matter to be communicated to the queen. Her majesty was generally kind enough to give an audience to all newcomers, so that they might explain the object of their mission, and present the dollar, or *hasina*, the acknowledgment of the queen's sovereignty; and a few days after my arrival at Antanànarìvo, I had the honour of being presented to Queen Ràsohèrina, and informing her of my reasons for coming into the country. As soon as I had arrived at the capital, she sent Ràmanìraka, one of the under-secretaries, to inquire my name, and to say she would send word previously when it would be convenient to receive me.

On Saturday, in the following week, a message was sent quite early in the morning, that we were to go to the palace at ten o'clock. Before I had finished dressing, Ràmanìraka came to see if I was ready; for the Malagasy are early risers; the queen frequently transacted business and went on journeys an hour or two before the time fixed upon. I hurried to Mr. Ellis's house, and together we walked up to the gateway, where we had to wait for a little time. Two young men, officers of the palace, came to escort us. Presently the gate was opened, and we mounted the steep ascent, taking off our hats; for the gate being opened, we were supposed to be then in the royal presence. Passing through the archway, we entered the spacious square courtyard; the great palace in front, with its verandah of three storeys, supported by immense wooden

columns, and its lofty roof, all painted white. On the left was a low stone building, the tomb of the first Radàma; and beyond this another large palace, but smaller than the first, and called the Silver House. In the second storey of the verandah, the queen was seated under a large scarlet umbrella, with her court surrounding her. We made a reverence as we passed, and proceeded along the side of the building to the farther end. A line of native troops was drawn up across the courtyard, having no uniform, but a lamba wound round their waists, and white crossbelts, which had an odd appearance on their brown breasts and backs. They were armed with oldfashioned flint-lock muskets and bayonets. We went up a narrow curious dark staircase, to the first-floor, and then passed along the side verandah to that in front of the building. The queen was seated in a chair, raised two or three steps above the floor, with her ladies on one side, and the gentlemen on the other. The former were all dressed in English fashion, and some really looked very well; many had head-dresses of bright colours, with a profusion of ribbons and flowers and feathers. Most of the gentlemen wore black-cloth suits of English clothes. The queen was very light in colour; not so handsome as many of her subjects, but dignified and graceful in her manners, with a kind pleasant expression of face. She wore a brocaded silk dress, with a light scarf shawl, and quite a jaunty-looking riding-hat with scarlet feathers. We made several obeisances as we proceeded towards her; she rose to receive us, and gave us her hand in a very friendly way. After a slight pause, I addressed her briefly, expressing my pleasure to find her showing kindness and protection to the English, as her predecessor Radàma had done, and trusting that she would show me the same favours. I went on to describe the work

I had come to do in the erection of the memorial churches, and hoped that the result would be for the good of her subjects and the kingdom. Ràmanìraka translated my speech into Malagasy, and the queen replied by a few words, expressing her approval. I then presented a dollar, as is customary at a first interview with a Malagasy sovereign. Mr. Ellis then spoke, telling the queen that I was acquainted with the construction of roads and other public works, and that I should be glad to give instruction to any of her officers and workmen on these points. He then presented her majesty with a beautifully-bound copy of the "New Congregational Hymn Book," sent by the Committee of the Congregational Union. After again shaking hands, we backed out, and, with more bowing, retired. A day or two after this, a number of presents were sent by the queen for those of us who had recently arrived—consisting of sheep, poultry, rice, and other articles of food.

The queen often accorded the same favour to those who were leaving the country, so as to give them an opportunity of thanking her for her protection and kindness. In case it was inconvenient to give an audience, a letter was generally sent, with a present of a lamba for the journey; and in forwarding one to myself at my departure for England, a note from the prime minister said, "And as the queen hears that you are leaving, she sends you a striped lamba, to wrap you up on the way."

A few days after the above interview, the queen gave us another proof of her kind feeling. She sent down to all the missionaries, inviting them to accompany her to Mahàzoarivo, one of her country retreats. I went on to Mr. Ellis's house at about eight o'clock, to inquire about going, nine to ten o'clock having been given as the time;

but, to my surprise, found she had gone nearly an hour ago. An officer had, however, been instructed to wait for us, and as the rest of our friends had not come, we immediately set off together in our palanquins. About half an hour's ride, to the east and south of the city, brought us to the place, and we found it to be a very charming spot. Large gardens laid out in European style, fine trees of good size (a rarity near the capital) overshadowing the house, an extensive lake, together with hundreds of people in their white dresses, and a brilliant sky over all, made a really beautiful scene. At the entrance of the grounds were two immense letters formed in grass borders surrounding flower-beds; they are R. R., standing for Radàma Rex, and were made by the first king of that name, by whose orders the gardens were laid out. Who would have imagined that a half-civilised chieftain, who was but leading his people from a semibarbarous state, should have wished to perpetuate his name by such a device in the learned tongue of Europe! Radàma made great exertions to obtain specimens of the most remarkable and useful trees and plants of the country, and especially those of service in the *Materia Medica.* Many were brought from great distances, and the gardens contain the finest and largest trees to be found within many miles of the capital. Some immense camphor-wood trees are the most conspicuous; and there are two or three specimens of a graceful fan-palm, as well as clumps of the ròfia, with its enormously long leaves. The gardens were rather neglected, and many of the beds were planted with cabbages instead of flowers. The lake contains an abundance of gold and silver fish, and a great part is covered with a purple waterlily growing in profusion.

As we passed up the central walk the band was playing,

and a cordon of soldiers surrounded the house where the queen was sitting. We passed round it to a large space beyond, where several bullocks were being killed, and in a few minutes cooked, as well, in great iron pots. Eating beef is an invariable accompaniment to all Malagasy festivities. We walked up to a rising ground overlooking the whole scene, which was very animated, for various games were going on—racing, jumping, etc. In the gardens on the upper part of the ground, a great quantity of vines are cultivated, as well as figs, mangoes, pineapples, and coffee-plants.

Presently, we were sent for to speak to her majesty, who was seated near the door of the house and surrounded by her ladies. She was dressed very handsomely in a long robe of muslin embroidered with gold, but all her attendants wore the simple native dress. After a few moments we retired and went to pay our respects to the prime minister, who had quite a little court surrounding him. He is a shrewd-looking elderly man, rather short in stature, with merry twinkling eyes; he was dressed in a mixture of European and native costume. In a little time we were summoned to come and eat, and certainly our friends at home would have been amused to see us squatting, native-fashion, on a mat under the mango-trees, tearing fowls to pieces with our fingers, scooping up rice with large horn-spoons, etc., for the supply of table requisites was very limited. It was a rather rough-and-ready proceeding, but very like our own picnic parties, where we are glad to dispense with ceremony and take everything in a free-and-easy manner.

The great annual festival of the Malagasy is at the new year, and as this feast takes its name of *fandròana*, or "the bath," from the bathing of the sovereign, it may be appro-

priately described in this place. It will be remembered that the Malagasy year is eleven days shorter than our own, so that the new year's festival falls in every one of our months, but eleven days earlier each year. In 1864 it fell in the month of March. It continues five days, the middle and principal day of which must always be either a Thursday or Sunday, as may be determined by the diviners; this year it was fixed for Sunday, the preceding Friday being the commencement, and the following Tuesday the concluding day, of the festival. During these days no work is done, nor indeed is much business transacted for a week afterwards, the time being quite given up to enjoyment, feasting, and visiting friends and relatives.

On the Thursday the representatives of the various tribes and divisions of the people went to the palace, to present the hasina to the queen; and finding that it was usual for the former missionaries to visit her majesty at this time, we requested permission to pay her the compliments of the season. This was immediately granted, and accordingly we went to the palace on the morning of Thursday. The queen was seated as usual in the balcony, with the scarlet umbrella held over her; but as the fandròana is a peculiarly national festival, when everything European is as much as possible disused, her majesty and her court were dressed entirely in native costume—the queen wearing one of the graceful striped lambas called *àrindràno*. After the usual obeisances, we approached and took the queen's hand; and then Mr. Ellis, as senior member of the mission, presented the dollar, and in a short speech wished her all happiness and prosperity. After a brief reply from her majesty we retired, again shaking hands, and so concluded our visit. The road leading up to the gateway was crowded with people bringing presents to the queen, consisting of

rice, sugarcane, baskets of manioc, fine mats, small offerings of money, and an immense quantity of firewood in bundles, which were piled on each side of the long flight of steps leading to the courtyard. This latter is of course to provide for the extensive cooking which takes place. Every slave brings his owner a bundle of fuel at this time.

The following day (Friday) being market-day, some of us went to visit the market at Zomà, which was densely crowded with people buying provisions, to make merry with their friends at the coming feast. The quantity of poultry was marvellous, and in the plain below was a splendid show of fat bullocks, many of which had been fattening for several months. Some of these were magnificent animals, and would have stood a good chance of a prize at a cattle-show in England. For several days previously, the roads were often almost impassable, and really dangerous, from the number of cattle being driven into the town to the residences of their respective owners. In the courtyard of every large house they might be seen and heard, awaiting their fate on the coming Sunday.

In the evening, just before dark, in every house-yard a small fire of the dried grass used for fuel was lighted. This had a most beautiful effect as seen from the upper parts of the city; in every direction there were these blazing lights—every one of the scores of houses scattered over the rice-plains had its fire; the numerous villages for many miles round the capital could all be discerned, even at great distances, by the lights. The boys fasten bunches of burning grass to long bamboos, and then run about with them, shouting and singing, so that a general murmur of rejoicing rose from all parts of the city. These fires are called *arèndrina*. The custom seems to be a relic of the ancient

fire-worship of the Eastern nations, once common in Western Asia, and even retained in some parts of England and Scotland by the making of bonfires on Midsummer Eve, the vigil of St. John Baptist's day.

On Saturday many presents of provisions were sent, and numbers of friends came to visit; everyone bringing a small piece of money, which is called *jaka*—a word applied also to the meat killed at the festival, and probably so termed from being given as a substitute for beef. In the evening a similar illumination to that of the previous night took place; and as soon as it was perfectly dark, a salute from all the cannon in the city announced that the queen was about to bathe—this being one of the chief ceremonies of the feast, and from which it takes its name. This is the real commencement of the new year, for the Malagasy, like the Jews, reckon the evening and morning as the day. We were all invited to go, but so short a time before the ceremony that word could not be sent to all the members of the mission, of whom two or three only were present. The courtyard and the palace were crowded with people, almost everyone in the building being dressed in the dark-red silk lamba used on state occasions. The bath was of silver, and a part of the great hall in the chief palace being screened off by scarlet curtains, the queen retired to bathe, and after a few minutes reappeared, with hair and face wet from the bath. On making her entry she repeated, "*Sàmba, sàmba, no tràtra harìva taòna!*"—"Happy, happy, we have reached the eve of the year;" to which the people replied by shouts of "*Traràntitra!*"—"Reach a good old age." Holding in her hand a horn filled with water, the queen passed through the people, sprinkling them on either hand, and then those outside the building in the balcony. During this ceremony the cannon again saluted, announcing the

conclusion of the royal bathing. The sprinkling is said to typify an abundance of rain during the coming year, but the bathing has probably some reference to a symbolical purification; for the fandròana festival has several observances which bear a resemblance to Jewish customs, although probably they are derived, in some cases at least, from a common origin, and from traditions of a remote antiquity.

After bathing, rice mixed with honey was handed to the guests, each one repeating "*Sàmba, sàmba,*" on tasting it. Formerly a small quantity of rice was placed on the head as well. The food was cooked and served in pots and dishes which have been preserved for many years, and were used at this festival by former sovereigns. A temporary hearth was formed in one corner of the reception-room, and there the rice was prepared.

After a third salute from the cannon the queen retired, and the guests dispersed to their homes, where it is customary for everyone to bathe: the head of every family used to perform, on a small scale, something of the same ceremonies as those observed at the palace. Another practice, now I believe passing into disuse, was to weep and lament during the night, for friends and relatives who had died during the past year; so that mourning was heard in almost every house, and every village became a Ramah. Many of the ancient customs are fast becoming obsolete; and year by year, as the influence of Christianity and European ideas extends, others will follow them into oblivion. In the previous year (1862), during the short reign of Radàma II., the observance of the fandròana was altogether omitted; for the king, in his liking for European institutions, seemed disposed to substitute Christmas Day in its stead as the national holiday.

Sunday was a strange and noisy day, very different from the usual quiet and orderly Sabbath in Antanànarìvo, with the crowded congregations streaming along the streets to and from their houses of prayer. Services were held, but much earlier than usual; for soon after sunrise the slaughtering of bullocks commenced, every family killing its own animal, or joining with others, and in the latter part of the day feasting upon the flesh. It happened to be communion Sabbath, and in some cases this ordinance was observed in the afternoon, as soon as the excitement of the killing was over, and the cattle were no longer being driven through the streets. Our Christian friends were much concerned at this breaking of the day of rest; but it was illegal to kill before or after the appointed day. Many of the leading officers protested against the desecration, but without avail, for the diviners appeared to rejoice in their power to fix the festival upon the sacred day of the Christians.

The number of cattle killed is very great, amounting sometimes to ten or twelve thousand in the capital and neighbourhood, so that the place resembled a vast slaughterhouse, and pools of blood were to be seen on every hand; while servants, carrying pieces of beef as presents, were going about in all directions. In some years the number of cattle slaughtered has been so great that it was necessary to order that fewer should be killed, lest the country should become impoverished. None are allowed to be killed for several days before or after the feast-day. The queen usually gives several hundred bullocks away to the poor; but the hind-quarter and tail are always brought to the sovereign as her portion of every animal killed. A bullock was sent from her majesty to the members of the mission; and everyone received numerous presents of beef from the chief nobles, officers, and other friends.

In former times, the king or queen sacrificed a red cock on the previous evening, and, in the morning, the first bullock killed was for the royal use, prayers and thanksgivings being offered by the sovereign before the ancient graves of the kings in the courtyard. These are seven in number, and Mr. Freeman describes Radàma I. in 1828 as offering a kind of sacrifice before each, by burning portions of the fat of the animal just killed, in a fire kindled opposite the door of every tomb. A portion of the yet quivering flesh was cut out and presented to the king, who with it touched his forehead, the tip of his tongue, and his right knee, saying, "I have tasted of the blessings of the year. May we continue to enjoy them, and taste of the same at the expiration of this!" Portions of the flesh are reserved, and, by some peculiar method of cooking and drying, are kept until the next year; and it is said that such meat is perfectly palatable and good, although no salt is used in the process. Formerly great numbers of cattle used to be driven through the palace-yard to receive the royal benediction previous to being killed.

Another custom, strangely resembling that of the Jews at the Passover, was to sprinkle part of the blood upon the lintel and doorposts of the house, or in some cases to suspend a rush or bundle of dried-grass dipped in the blood over the doorway. This interesting observance seems now almost discontinued, at any rate in the capital and its immediate neighbourhood, although it is probably retained in other parts of the country.

The next few days are kept as a holiday, and the city has a cheerful lively appearance from the parties of people dressed in their best clothes, and adorned with their jewellery, going about to visit their friends and take presents. Numbers of persons living at a distance come up to

see their relatives at the capital; slaves working in the country estates come to pay their respects to their masters; no markets are held, and it is a time of general rejoicing and family meetings. I used to visit many of my Malagasy friends at these times, and always received a hearty welcome. Nothing pleased them better than my staying and joining with them in partaking of the *jaka*, sitting on the ground in native fashion, and eating of the variety of dishes in which the meat is prepared. It is polite before eating to repeat the benediction, "Blessed, blessed be the Creator! May we reach a thousand years, the family unseparated!"

On the Thursday following we received an invitation from the queen to come and eat jaka at the palace, on the Friday at one o'clock. Just as we were setting off we were invited by the prime minister to visit him at the same time. We proceeded to the palace, alighted at the gate, and crossing the courtyard, were conducted to the smaller of the two great buildings—the Tràno Vòla, or Silver House. The chief room where we were to dine is of great size, with one of the enormous posts supporting the roof in the centre of the apartment. A number of pictures were hung on the walls, and these, together with the painted decorations, gave the room a curiously mixed European and Oriental appearance. A long table was set for us, the priests and Sisters of Mercy connected with the Roman Catholic mission being on one side, and we of the Protestant mission on the other. Several officers of rank were also present, all dressed in the handsome red silk lamba. The chief secretary of state, Rainimàharàvo, took the head of the table, as the representative of the queen, whom we did not see. The entertainment was not what we generally understand by a royal banquet. It merely consisted of the jaka, beef slightly high, dressed in a peculiar manner, and

eaten with rice, served up upon pieces of fresh green banana-leaf, laid upon plates. This was the whole of the feast. The senior priest, M. Laborde's secretary, and one of our own number, then presented, each, a dollar, and after drinking the healths of Ràsohèri Manjàkà, Queen Victoria, and the Emperor Napoleon, we rose, and having spent a few minutes in examining the contents of the room, took our leave. We stopped at the prime minister's on our way home, in order to eat with him; he did not set us down to the meagre fare of the palace, but provided an abundant and excellent dinner for our entertainment.

About a month after the fandròana, the queen left for Ambòhimànga, the old capital, in order to present the same sacrifices and prayers at the tombs of Andrian-impoina and her aunt Rànavàlona as had been offered at the ancient royal tombs at Antanànarìvo. She was accompanied by a large retinue of soldiers and attendants, and by the greater portion of the high officers and their families and servants; indeed, the city appeared quite deserted during her absence. Her majesty left on Sunday morning, that being considered a lucky day; and as this journey was one of ten or twelve miles, she was carried in a large Indian palanquin, with lattice-work at the front and sides, the only one of the kind in the country. So much was the queen under the influence of the idol-keepers and diviners, that the day, the exact hour, the path to be taken, and every circumstance of the journey, was determined by the *sikidy*, or divination. Sometimes a most circuitous path was pointed out as the proper way, and wherever it might lead the instructions were strictly carried out. The government were ashamed that the Europeans should see how much the queen was influenced by belief in these deceptions, and, on one occasion, declined to accept our offer to accompany her majesty.

Immediately upon the queen's departure, a very strict guard was established at all the gates, a temporary barrier being formed across each road leading into the city, and the only opening closed by men squatting on the ground with bayonets crossed. Everyone entering had to give a strict account of himself, and strangers from a distance were frequently unable to gain admission at all. Europeans were not interfered with at that time, but on subsequent occasions there was much annoyance experienced, and vexatious obstructions were put in the way of those who wished to go in or out of the city. A kind of passport system was introduced, but from the contradictory orders given by the officers in command of the city it was impossible to tell what was really necessary. The evening gun was fired considerably earlier than usual, and no one was allowed to go in or out of the gates after dark, or to walk in the streets, and Europeans were not exempt from these regulations. The guards were trebled in number, and their monotonous cries of "Zovy" made, at times, an almost deafening chorus until the small hours of the morning.

We were not sorry to hear of the queen's intended return to town, after staying away about four weeks, and to be released from the strict watch at the gates. Thursday was fixed for the public entry, which was an occasion of great state ceremony. From early morning, the road from the palace to the northern gate, about three-quarters of a mile long, was lined with a double row of soldiers in their neat white uniforms. A large number of officers in European uniforms of all kinds, with cocked hats and feathers, were seated in Àndohàlo to receive her majesty. For two or three hours before she came, numbers of people were continually arriving in their palanquins, with their servants and slaves running after them. The band kept playing a

variety of tunes, until at last the main body of the people arrived; officers on horseback and on foot, ladies of the court in English dresses of all colours, and head-dresses to match, carried in palanquins by their slaves, with their servants laden with baggage; and at last the scarlet umbrella appeared, announcing the queen and the members of the royal family. She was surrounded by a crowd of soldiers in the familiar English red-coats, and by officers in gorgeous uniforms. Her majesty was magnificently dressed, with a kind of crown upon her head. On coming to the centre of Àndohàlo she descended from her palanquin, and was conducted by the prime minister to a seat placed in a slight hollow, in which is the sacred stone, a piece of bare rock coming to the surface. Here she received the congratulations of the people on her safe return. After some little pause she was seated in another palanquin, and all proceeded up to the palace, the singing-women keeping up a strange kind of chant, and numbers of men in Arab dresses dancing and flourishing silk scarves, the people shouting and cannon firing. Altogether it was a remarkable spectacle—a mixture of barbaric pomp and European display only to be seen in a semicivilised country like Madagascar. One very pleasing feature in this public entry into the city was the practice of adorning the head with wild flowers, and leaves and tendrils of climbing-plants. Even the slaves carrying their masters had garlands of brilliant flowers, giving the procession the appearance of a rural fête. Ambòhimànga and its neighbourhood abound with wild flowers, and its wooded slopes had evidently been well searched for the adornment of the travellers.

Amongst other points of similarity between Malagasy and Jewish customs, is the ceremonial uncleanness con-

nected with the dead. It is unlawful for anyone who has been near a corpse, or attended a funeral, to enter the palace-yard or approach the sovereign until a month has elapsed. Should any of the royal family, except the sovereign, be ill, they are not allowed to continue within the palace or its courtyard, lest they should die there and the place be polluted. No member of the royal house may come near a corpse, excepting that of a relative or a most intimate friend. Radàma I., by attending the funeral of Mr. Hastie, showed his disregard for these customs, and his high esteem for that humane and benevolent man.

"A custom prevails amongst the Malagasy, that if a criminal can obtain sight of the sovereign he is pardoned, whether before or after conviction, or if the sovereign should accept a hasina sent to him by the accused. Even criminals at work upon the highroad, if they can catch sight of the monarch as he passes by, can claim their pardon. Hence, by a sort of anomaly in this singular law, they are ordered to withdraw from the road when the sovereign is known to be coming by. Exemption from punishment was also claimed by all who had rendered any particular service to the sovereign or the state; and not by individuals merely, but by their descendants and by other branches of the family upon the same plea. During the latter part of the reign of Radàma, many unsuccessful efforts were made by him to abolish the long-continued abuses by which the ends of justice were thus defeated."* By an ingenious stratagem, he showed the folly of such customs and the injustice caused by them; he eventually abolished them altogether, and proclaimed that henceforth he would only reward those who were deserving.

* "History of Madagascar," vol. i. p. 376.

CHAPTER XII.

STATE CEREMONIALS—CONCLUDED.

Malagasy royalty—A royal housewarming—Description of the palaces at Antananarivo—Reception of foreign representatives—Signing of treaty with England—Coronation ceremonies.

"THE pomp and circumstance" surrounding royalty in Madagascar can hardly be thoroughly understood without knowing something of the residences of the sovereign at the capital; and as the opening of a new palace, in April 1867, gave us an unusually favourable opportunity of examining the royal buildings, an account of the ceremonies observed may be fitly inserted in this place. It will be seen that, in order of *time*, the palace was opened *after* the reception of H.B.M.'s consul and the signing of the English treaty; but it is here placed first in order of *narration*, as the description of the buildings will render clearer what is subsequently told. The following is transcribed, with but slight verbal corrections, from a letter written immediately after the ceremony:—

It is usual for the sovereigns of Madagascar to build a house in their palace-yard within a few months of their accession to the throne. The late Queen Rasohèrina was faithful to this as well as to almost every other custom received from her ancestors; for, while allowing toleration to Christianity, she was herself strongly attached to the ancient usages of the kingdom, and was not at all disposed to set them aside in favour of European customs, as her

predecessor, Radàma II., was inclined to do. His reign was too short to permit him, had he been so disposed, to build a new royal house; but the long reign of his mother, Queen Rànavàlona, was distinguished by the erection of two very large and costly palaces, which tower over every other building in the capital, and are visible for a very great distance in all directions. Before describing the new palace and the ceremonies at its opening, a few words of description of the royal courtyard and the palaces previously erected, will probably render clearer what follows.

The ròva, or courtyard, of the royal houses at Antanànarìvo is a large enclosure of an oblong shape, situated on the summit of the hill on which the capital is built, and nearly at its highest point. It is about 380 feet in length from north to south, by about 200 feet in breadth. It is raised several feet above the level of the surrounding ground by massive retaining-walls of stone, plastered with lime, and protected by an inclosure of strong wooden fencing, each piece being set close together and the top cut into a pointed form.

The chief entrance is by a flight of steps on the north side, with a stone gateway of considerable size. This has evidently been copied from a drawing of one of the Roman triumphal arches, which it much resembles, though on a smaller scale. On each side of the archway are two three-quarter Roman-Doric columns with pedestals, cornice, and blocking-course, and between these a semicircular-headed niche. In the centre, above the arch, is a curious square panel with a large looking-glass set in it, and over this is a figure of an eagle, in copper, with outstretched wings; there are similar figures, but of larger size, on the ridge of the roofs of the chief palaces. Vòro-mahèry—that is,

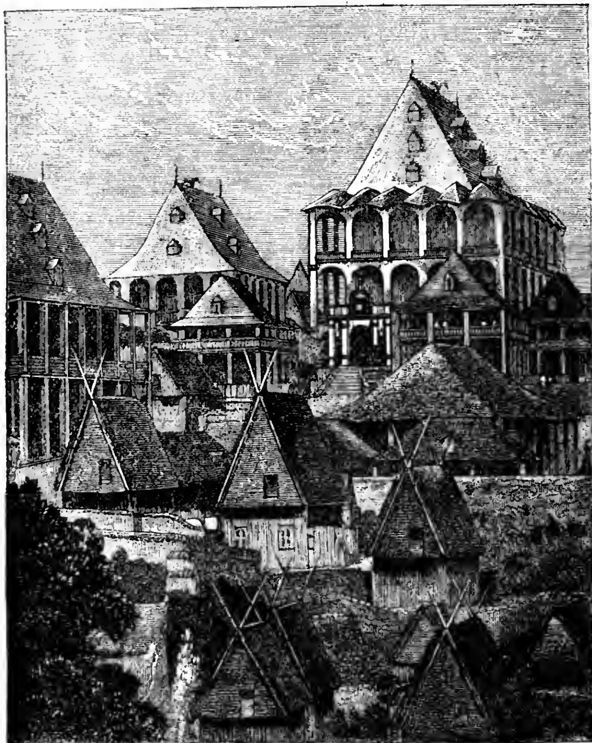
"eagle," or, more literally, "strong bird"—is the name of the tribe inhabiting that part of the province of Imérina in which the capital is situated; and it has consequently been adopted as a kind of crest or badge by the sovereign. Radàma II. used it upon his official seal, medals, and other decorations.

Entering the gateway we pass between the bayonets of the Malagasy sentries on guard. These "household troops" are in no way superior in appearance or description to those stationed at the gates of the city. Except on special occasions, they are not dressed in uniform; and their slovenly and unsoldierly looks would scandalise an English officer.

Stepping into the courtyard, we find ourselves in an open space of about 120 or 130 feet square. In front of us rises the great palace, called "Manjàka Miàdàna," *i.e.* "reigning prosperously." This structure, even in Europe, would be thought remarkable; but in a half-civilised country like Madagascar, where there are none of those appliances for saving labour and for raising heavy materials which every European country possesses, it is really an astonishing piece of construction. It is built entirely of timber, and surrounded by a broad verandah the whole height of the building. The verandah is supported by enormous posts, averaging two feet in diameter, and is in three storeys. There are seven bays in the length and five in the breadth, each bay having a semicircular arch formed by boarding.

A roof of high pitch, hipped at each end, covers the whole. It is prolonged over the verandah at a gentle slope, and projects over each verandah-post in a curiously curved beak-like form. The roof-covering is of wooden shingles, and in the centre of each side of the roof are three storeys of dormer-windows. The great central posts project a little

above the ridge, and are finished with lightning-conductors. The total height cannot be less than 120 feet, of which the roof probably is not less than 50 feet. The palace is about



ROYAL PALACES AND HOUSES OF NOBLES.

100 feet long by 65 feet broad, exclusive of the balconies, which project fifteen feet from the walls. The whole building, including roof, verandah, and walls, is painted white,

except the massive balustrading of each tier of the verandah, which is coloured red and black. At a little distance, no doors or windows are visible, as they have no projecting mouldings to distinguish them, and are painted white, like the walls. The glass windows are very minute, being merely small squares placed in the upper storeys—the large apartments being lighted chiefly by the open doorways, and windows fitted only with shutters.

The ground-floor appears to be divided into two immense rooms. In the northern one the English and the American treaties were signed. The ceiling and upper part of the walls are painted in curious but not inelegant designs, having somewhat of an Egyptian or Hindoo character. The lower part of the walls is covered with French papers representing hunting and war scenes. One of the great central posts comes through the middle of the room, like a ship's mast in a state-cabin; it is boarded round, and appears not much less than three feet in diameter. The floors of this and the other apartments are beautifully inlaid with parquetry of different hardwoods — a dark kind resembling ebony, and others like box and rosewood, being principally used. The only furniture visible when we were present was the queen's throne, a small table for the crown, and side-tables, bearing immense silver vases of native workmanship, made after European models.

On our right hand, as we enter the courtyard, is the fencing of the ròva; on the left are gardens, with a pretty summer-house of coloured and painted glass. Farther on, on the left side, is the tomb of Radàma I. The lower part of this is a plain square structure of stone; but upon the top is a small house of wood painted in bright colours. It contains a single room, which is furnished with table, chair, water and wine, in belief that the spirit of the deceased

monarch may be able to refresh himself. In the tomb beneath, as already described, are buried an immense quantity of clothing, uniforms, arms, plate, and other valuables, as well as several thousand dollars.

At the south-east angle of the court is the second palace, called Tràno Vòla, or "Silver House," so named after a smaller house which it superseded, in which the nail-heads and other fastenings were made of silver. This building, although of great size, is dwarfed by its gigantic neighbour to the west. It has a verandah surrounding it, but of two stages only, the posts and other parts having a more architectural finish, with mouldings, capitals, etc., than those of the great palace. It has the same form of roof, painted white as well as the verandah, but the body of the building is coloured red. It is about two-thirds the size of Manjàka Miàdàna.

The large central room is very lofty, and is decorated much in the same style as the larger palace; but it contains a good many articles of furniture, and a number of pictures sent as presents from the English and French courts. Amongst the latter is a full-length portrait of Queen Victoria, sent by her to Radàma II. on his accession; also a large portrait of Sir Robert Farquhar, governor of Mauritius in the time of Radàma I. His successful efforts to stop the Malagasy slave-trade have already been described. There are also coloured lithographic portraits of the French Emperor and Empress, and a number of other smaller pictures, together with some curious oil-paintings of two young princes of a former reign. They are by a native artist, and very hard and stiff in execution. Amongst other things there is a large clock made by an ingenious Malagasy workman, and also a small organ, together with sideboards, tables, etc.

To the south of the two large palaces are a number of smaller and older houses. The most important of these are three: one on the west, called Bé-sàkana, *i.e.* "great breadth;" another on the east side, named Màsoàndro, or "the sun;" and a third to the north, called Mahìtsy, "straight" or upright—a word, as with us, also used in an ethical sense. These houses were built in the time of the earlier kings of the present reigning family, and are of the old Malagasy type—simple parallelograms, not half the size of the great palace, but with enormously high-pitched roofs. The horns crossing each other at the gables are of great projection, ten or twelve feet. Of these houses, Bé-sàkana is regarded as the first house of the kingdom; it is also called the Làpa, or throne, and the sovereign newly proclaimed is placed there immediately upon his accession, and receives homage from his subjects. The deceased sovereign also lies here in state for one day and night, the whole building being hung from ridge to floor with costly cloths and ornaments. The height of these houses is between fifty and sixty feet. In Mahìtsy the idols are kept, and from this circumstance it is considered the headquarters of the religious element in the kingdom, as Bé-sàkana is of the political. The idols kept here are Manjàka-tsi-roà and Fantàka, which are regarded as especially the tutelary deities or guardians of the sovereign; they are also called, respectively, the idols of the sovereign, and of the oaths.

In the courtyard between the new house and the large palace, are a number of what appear to be small wooden dwellings, placed together in a line, gable to gable, and enclosed within a fencing. These however are houses for the dead, not for the living. These seven small buildings are erected over the graves of former sovereigns and members of the royal family. One of them covers the

remains of Andriamàsinavàlona, who reduced the whole of Imérina under his authority, and was the founder of the present reigning family.

The new palace, opened in April 1867, is situated to the south of the Tràno Vòla, and east of Manjàka Miàdàna, a space of sixty or seventy feet being left between the two, while Màsoàndro is only two or three yards to the south of it. It is raised above the general level of the courtyard by a platform ten or twelve feet high. The building is sixty-two feet in length by thirty feet in breadth, and is about fifty feet high to the ridge of the roof. Although much smaller than the two great palaces, it is far superior in design and workmanship to either of them, and reflects great credit on Mr. Cameron, by whom it was designed and superintended. It has been named Manàmpy-sòa, *i.e.* "adding what is good" or pleasant. The first corner-post was raised on the 25th of April, 1865, so that it was about two years in construction, and at its opening was still incomplete in much of its ornamentation.

Like all public works, or work done for the sovereign, in Madagascar, this new palace was built entirely by *fànom-poana,* or the unpaid labour due from the people to the queen and the government. The wood was cut in the forest, was dragged to the capital, was worked and put together, without any wages, except the most trifling gratuity, being paid to workmen or labourers; and so with masonry and every other description of work. For many months during the early stages of the construction of the building, hundreds of carpenters and masons were employed upon it, so that hardly any other work could be carried on in the capital, except at intervals, and then only by inferior workmen, and those who were either civilians or slaves. The great majority of skilled workmen are also

soldiers, and are consequently obliged to work for their superior officers, amongst whom the different departments of work were portioned out for execution. The share of the country-people and non-military class in the labour, was to cut and bring the timber from the forest. The main timbers of the house—corner-posts, wall-plates, tie-beams, etc.—are very massive; and as the forests are from twenty to thirty miles distant, and there are no roads worth the name, the labour of transporting the enormous logs was immense. All day long, and sometimes even at night, the shouts and strange cries of scores of men might be heard, dragging the massive timbers by main force up the steep roads leading into the city; and this continued with little interruption for several months.

The day for opening the palace was not announced until about a week previously. On the preceding Sunday a kabàry was held in Àndohàlo, and the chief secretary of state brought the queen's message. On previous occasions of this kind, as well as at the birth of children in the royal family, a virtual suspension of the laws was allowed, and two or three days became *àndro-tsy-màty*, *i.e.* "days not dead;" the meaning of this phrase being, that no one would be put to death or otherwise punished for any offences committed during the privileged period. Accordingly, the most open and shameless licentiousness used to prevail, and scenes not to be described were to be witnessed in every part of the city. On this occasion, however, it was gratifying to see how the influence of Christianity was prevailing, putting to shame former customs, even amongst those who were still heathen. The queen sent word that, while it was to be a day of rejoicing, all who offended against the laws would be accounted guilty, notwithstanding ancient usage on such occasions; licentiousness

and drunkenness were strictly forbidden ; and as it turned out, we could not help remarking that on the night of opening, the city was apparently more quiet and orderly than usual, and would really have put to shame most towns in England on occasions of public rejoicing.

On Wednesday, the 3rd of April, all the town was astir, and hundreds of people came pouring in from the country and neighbouring towns. The older men, heads of tribes and chiefs of villages, generally wore the red lamba, used at marriages, at the new year's feast, and at other festivities. This lamba is made of native silk, dyed with the bark of a tree to a dull red colour, but with borders of brighter tints, often arranged with great taste. Some are ornamented with elaborate patterns in small beads made of a mixture of tin and silver. In the city everyone appeared to be moving towards the palace-yard.

At half-past three we assembled at the dwelling of one of our number who lived near the palace, his house being our usual rendezvous when going to see her majesty. After waiting a little time, two officers, both of whom happened to be Christians, came to fetch us to the palace. Most of the gentlemen connected with the mission appeared, as well as two of the ladies, who thought it too good an opportunity to be missed of seeing Malagasy customs. We rode up nearly to the gate of the courtyard before dismounting from our palanquins, all the approaches being crowded with people, as well as the balconies of the houses and the courtyards on the line of road. We gentlemen had to undergo a slight examination, being felt over by the officer at the gate, lest we should have any weapons about us. Everyone had to submit to this ordeal, although it was the only occasion on which such a form of precaution had been used since our coming into the country.

The courtyard was crowded with people, the greater part of them being seated, as if intending to stay for some time. A line of soldiers surrounded the ròva, while a double row of the maràmitra, or bodyguard, formed a lane or passage across from the gateway to the south-east corner of the court leading to the new house. We were conducted to the verandah of the Silver Palace, which is fenced off from the open space. Mounting a raised platform, we could see over the crowds of people, and observe without inconvenience the variety of costume. In front of the great palace, a number of chiefs of districts and men in authority in the country places, were seated; and near to them was a large assemblage of officers of inferior rank, all wearing the red lamba, the officers having English or French silk hats. The women were mostly seated in groups by themselves, and made a great display of jewellery in earrings, bracelets, and necklaces. The great majority were dressed in neat print dresses and fine white lambas. Inside the enclosure with ourselves were a number of the higher officers and some of the judges, together with a score or so of Malagasy ladies, wives and daughters of the officers and nobles, also attired in the national red lamba. In some cases this robe was of black silk, with narrow stripes of blue and other colours, in elegant patterns and with rich borders.

At sunset we were invited to go up to the verandah of the new house, and await the arrival of the queen. Passing between the two chief palaces, we turned to the left, and mounted a flight of steps leading up to the raised platform on which the new house is built. The prime minister stood at the top to receive us. He was dressed in a magnificent lamba, shirt of blue satin, uniform pantaloons, etc., and wearing bracelets of large red coral beads, and a massive

gold chain. The building was surrounded with a guard of the maranitra, and within them were the highest military officers and the chiefs of the civilians, the judges, and other people of high rank and authority. We passed round the east and south sides of the house, and were placed near to the western door, so that we might enter very soon after the queen. Here we stood, and had plenty of leisure to examine the construction of the house; indeed, we could well have dispensed with this part of the proceedings, as it became very wearisome, standing for nearly an hour and a half, with little to see, as it soon grew dark. There was plenty to hear, however; for one band with drums was playing close to us, two others were going on down below in different parts of the courtyard; and this music, with the singing and clapping of hands and national cry of "*Hoo!*" made a barbarous mixture of sounds that was sometimes too loud to be pleasant.

The new palace is externally somewhat like a Greek cross in shape, with lofty gables at the extremities of each arm; but it becomes nearly a square in plan by being filled up with a verandah, which also runs along the north and south sides. The chief doorways are on the west and east sides, and have pedimental heads supported by Corinthian columns. The verandah is a very effective piece of work, and is beautifully executed. The posts are fluted, and form pilasters, or rather flat columns, with Ionic capitals, carrying a rich entablature with dentil and other mouldings. Between each post is a round arch carried by secondary pilasters. The body of the house is built in the usual Malagasy style, of thick upright planks of dark red wood. The edges of these are moulded, giving them a massive and ornamental effect. The corner-posts are of great size, being about fourteen by twenty inches square.

The four main gables have deep barge-boards carved with open-work cusping, and with hip-knobs carrying the lightning-conductors. The general effect of these lofty gables resembles that of the old timber houses built in the Elizabethan period, many of which still remain in ancient towns in England; while the classic details of the verandah suggest that revival of the antique styles which gave such a mixed character to buildings of succeeding reigns.

Mr. Cameron informed us that the queen instituted a new *rèfy*, or standard of measurement, for the building of this house. The Malagasy measurement of length is a somewhat variable one, the rèfy being as much as a man can measure between the tips of his fingers, when the arms are stretched to their widest extent. It may generally be taken at from 5 feet 8 inches to 6 feet; the queen's rèfy, however, was 5 feet 3 inches, and all the chief dimensions of the new building are multiples of this measure. The queen took the greatest interest in the construction from its commencement, but her interference in all the details hampered and annoyed the architect very much at times, many things having been altered over and over again. Her majesty would have no locks put on any of the doors, but only latches, so that no part of the house could be fastened from the outside.

We waited until the dusk deepened into darkness; for although lanterns were placed all round the courtyard, and in the verandahs of the palaces, none were lighted until the queen had entered the house. At last, at about half-past seven, a number of the queen's slaves appeared, carrying rolls of mats for the floor, a large shallow wooden box to form the hearth, baskets of earth for filling the same, mattresses, beds, tables, candles, rice, and a

number of other articles. They waited outside with their burdens, for nothing must enter before the queen. Presently she came, preceded by one of her aunts. She passed completely round the house two or three times, but there was no salutation; in fact, on account of the darkness, we were not aware of her having passed the first time until she had gone; but the second time we could just distinguish her by the gleaming of the coronet on her head. As far as we could make out in the darkness and the crowding of the people, she entered the house, and then coming out again for a few moments, lights were brought, the different articles carried in, a fire kindled, and the house lighted up. The soldiers presented arms, and a salute was fired from all the cannon in the city. There is some symbolical meaning in the queen entering first into the new house; she is supposed to be the light of the building. Although this was Wednesday evening, being after sunset it was reckoned as Thursday, the Malagasy notion being something like that of the Jews on this point. Thursday and Sunday are the two lucky days for the sovereign, and nothing of importance is ever done except on one or other of these days.

We had still to wait some little time after the queen had entered, the house meanwhile being furnished and illuminated. We were requested not to *lean* against the building, and to take care on entering to take the first step with the *right* foot.

At last we were invited to enter, and it was certainly a strange scene which met our eyes on stepping into the central room. No one saluted the queen on entering, but merely bowed to her. Her majesty was seated, in Malagasy fashion, on a couch on the floor at the north side of the apartment, her near relatives close to her, and the

prime minister, secretary of state, and other high officers at a little distance. In the middle of the room blazed a wood-fire, with a great red earthen pot of rice cooking over it—several of the queen's servants, armed with large wooden spoons, superintending the process.

The Europeans were directed to seat themselves on the mats on the south side of the room, where accordingly we squatted as we best could, but with a constant feeling that we had more legs than we well knew what to do with. The room rapidly filled with the officers, judges, and chief civilians and their wives. While the rice was cooking we had time to look about and examine the interior of the building. It appeared somewhat small, and evidently built more for use as a comfortable dwelling-house, than as a palace for state occasions. The central room seemed to be not more than about twenty-seven or twenty-eight feet square, and under twenty feet high. A narrow gallery with massive gilt balustrading runs all round it. The groundwork of walls and ceiling is of the ordinary white wood (*hètatra*) used for these purposes in most houses, but beautifully worked and put together. This plain surface has since been covered with the richest wall-papers. Upon this white wood, the ornamental cornices, panelling, skirting, and door and window casings, are fixed. These are all of a beautiful dark-grained wood, called *vòambòana*, a kind of rosewood. The windows are made with double sashes and folding shutters, in English fashion. Two doorways on each side of the central room, north and south, lead into smaller rooms, which are entirely panelled with dark wood, and have a snug comfortable appearance, like an English dining-room.

After waiting for a quarter of an hour or more, the rice was pronounced to be done, and some of it being ladled

out, was with a good deal of ceremony handed to the queen. She uttered a short form of congratulation or thanksgiving, which we heard but imperfectly; and then the whole company, with one voice, replied with a shout of "Traràntitra!" Outside the palace the troops presented arms, the bands played the national air, and the cannon thundered out a salute. Rice mixed with honey was then handed round in flat dishes of black glazed earthenware, each dish having a foot or stand attached to it. Instead of spoons, pieces of banana-leaf twisted into a kind of ladle were used. With no small amount of laughing and joking, we helped ourselves to this dainty dish, causing not a little amusement to cur Malagasy friends, who were highly interested in our awkward use of leaf spoons.

After all had partaken of the rice, the presentation of dollars, or tokens of allegiance, commenced. The queen's immediate relatives first presented, and then the prime minister, on behalf of the army, as their commander-in-chief. After him, the headmen of the different tribes and the chiefs of the principal towns in Imérina made their speeches, and offered the dollar. After this had gone on for a little time, the queen seemed to be rather tired of the sameness, and signed to the prime minister to cut short some of the old men, who were becoming decidedly lengthy and prosy in their remarks. At last he stopped them altogether, and beckoned to us to come near. We English, the French priests, and the Norwegian missionaries then presented our dollars, and, it being by that time nearly half-past nine, requested permission to retire. The ladies and some of the gentlemen of our party then left, but the queen sent word that she would like some of us to stay and hear the singing which was to follow. Accordingly a few of us remained.

For half an hour or more, different parties of singers came in successively, standing near the door, and went through their strangely wild barbaric songs, which were accompanied with clapping of hands and shouting. With two or three of these chants there was a kind of dance, and a good deal of prostration and obeisance to her majesty. We could not distinguish much of the words of the songs, but they appeared to consist chiefly of extravagant laudation of the queen. Once or twice I caught the words, "*Ràmatòa-Ràsohèrina, tsy mandìa tàny*," *i. e.* "Our Lady Ràsohèrina does not tread the earth," meaning, she is carried. Some of the songs appeared to be very ludicrous, for they provoked repeated bursts of laughter, in which the queen heartily joined. It was altogether a novel scene—one of those strange contrasts and minglings of civilised and semi-barbarous customs which Madagascar so frequently furnishes—a sight which we were all amused and interested to witness. Soon after ten o'clock we made our adieus to the queen with the usual words, "*Traràntitra, tòmpoko-vavy é.*"

Coming out into the courtyard, the great palace was lighted up with lanterns, which were also placed all round the ròva. Some few of the people appeared to have left, but the great mass of them were still seated on the ground, with that power of quiet endurance which the Malagasy possess in an eminent degree. As we went home through the city, except for the music of the bands, everything seemed quieter than usual, and very few people were about the streets. But all through the night the cannon fired, six at a time, every half-hour, giving those who lived in the city a very broken night's rest.

It had been announced that the festivities were to be kept up for three days, and some of us intended to have

gone to the palace on the following morning; but between eight and nine o'clock, a salute from the whole of the artillery in the city announced the conclusion of the proceedings, and the streets were presently crowded with the people returning home, after literally "making a night of it." It appeared that the queen had become tired with her night's amusement, and had brought the festivities to an unexpectedly early conclusion; and thus terminated the ceremonies of the royal housewarming.

In the month of November, 1864, H.B.M.'s consul for Madagascar, T. C. Pakenham, Esq., came up to Antanànarìvo to negotiate a commercial treaty between the English and Malagasy governments. A hundred soldiers and officers were sent to meet him while yet at a considerable distance from the capital, and a salute of cannon announced his entrance into the city.

A day or two after his arrival, Mr. Pakenham had a public reception at the palace, and an audience of the queen. He very kindly invited the whole of the English residents to accompany him, and most of us did so. The ceremony was quite a grand display. All the military officers, from the 10th Honour upwards, were ordered to attend. As we entered the palace-yard, we saw that the whole square in front of Manjàka Miàdàna was lined with officers in handsome uniforms, with no lack of gold lace and decorations, while behind them was a line of soldiers in the familiar English red-coats.

The queen was seated on a dais in the lower balcony of the palace, with her back towards the gateway, and surrounded by her court. As we entered the ròva, the officers and soldiers presented arms to the consul, the band struck up "God save the Queen," and we marched across, uncovered, making the usual obeisance. We passed along the

side of the palace, between a double line of the queen's singers—the men dressed in Arab costume, the women in European dress. These singers kept up an odd kind of chant, with clapping of hands and the beating of wooden drums. We proceeded to the south end of the building, ascended the staircase, and walked along the verandah to the north end, where the queen was seated.

Her majesty was handsomely dressed in a white muslin robe embroidered with gold and flowers, and wore a kind of coronet. We kissed hands, and then Mr. Pakenham spoke in English, one of the under-secretaries translating. He told the queen that he came in peace, and thanked her for the protection shown to Christianity and the missionaries; he said, further, that England was a Christian country, and Queen Victoria a Christian queen, and that she was pleased to hear of the religious freedom allowed in Madagascar. He then remarked that England was strong, and as long as Madagascar was the friend of England it would also be strong; asking her, if she doubted this, to inquire of her ambassadors, who had seen our soldiers and ships, whether we were not powerful, etc.

After a few other remarks, the queen inquired after his health and journey up the country, and then, again kissing her majesty's hand, we took our leave, retiring across the courtyard to the tune of our national anthem. We could not help remarking that everything that could be thought of was done by the government to give impressiveness to the ceremony, and to show honour to the representative of our own queen.

For several months the treaty was under consideration, and as some of the clauses had to be referred to the English Foreign Office for approval, it was not signed until the month of June in the following year. In addition to the

special commercial advantages conceded, the clauses about liberty of conscience were very full and explicit.

The provisions in the treaty with regard to the ownership of the memorial churches not appearing quite satisfactory, supplementary clauses were afterwards appended to it, at Mr. Ellis's request, through Mr. Pakenham; these were approved and agreed to by the native government, and every guarantee that could be expected was given, that the buildings would be preserved for ever for the purposes for which they were erected.

Reserving to a subsequent chapter further notice of the character of Queen Ràsohèrina, and the personal influence she exerted upon political and religious movements during her reign, it may be observed, that, partly owing to ill-health, she was induced in the summer of 1867 to try the effect of a journey to the eastern coast, not only for the benefit of the change of air and scene, but also to bathe in the hot medicinal springs of Ràno-mafàna. The journey was no doubt undertaken for political reasons as well—partly because it had been the custom of her ancestors to make such "progresses," and also for the purpose of showing the tribes in the eastern part of the country the military force at the disposal of their sovereign.

Her majesty left the capital in June, accompanied by a very large retinue, consisting of the members of the government, the principal military and civil officers and their wives, 6000 soldiers, and a great number of slaves and other attendants, amounting in number, it is said, to about 40,000 people. Great preparations were made for the journey, by improving the roads, and providing stores of rice, bullocks, etc.; but those who knew the difficulties of the route and the thinly-populated character of the country, and consequent scarcity of food, looked with much

apprehension at the prospect of the journey of this immense number of people. Everyone had to provide a tent, for no one place on the road could have afforded house accommodation for a hundredth part of those who accompanied the queen. These fears were not realised to so great an extent as might have been expected; less mortality took place than had been predicted, but still a great many died on the road from fatigue and exposure; although, as no European except M. Laborde was amongst her majesty's attendants, it was difficult to gain precise information on this point. In some of the most difficult and dangerous parts of the forest, it is said that the prime minister and other high officers carried the queen's palanquin, to encourage and raise her drooping spirits. They travelled very slowly, as might have been expected from the immense number of people and the difficulties of the road. It took a whole day for 1500 palanquins to cross the river Mangòro; and the rest of the people did not reach the camp till some days afterwards.

The soldiers were formed into five divisions—one carrying the tent, one the cooking utensils and spears, one the guns and sleeping-mats, and the other two had always to be in readiness for any service required about the queen. The camp was divided into four parts: her majesty in the middle, in a blue tent, surrounded, wherever she halted for the night, by high palisades; the prime minister north of the queen's tent, flying the Malagasy flag; east, west, and south were occupied by other high officers of state, and by M. Laborde. The two idols of the royal family were carried with the queen, and were kept in a tent pitched near to that of her majesty. Before the people left for the coast, very hearty and earnest religious services were held to implore the Divine blessing and protection; and then

again, after their return, to give thanks for the comparative immunity from disease experienced on both journeys. Public worship was kept up in the camp both on Sundays and at other times; and a considerable impression was produced upon the people along the line of march by seeing the large number of Christians joining in the worship of the true God.

The foreign consuls and other officials visited her majesty during her stay at Andèvorànto, and she showed special attention to Captain Brown, of H.B.M.S. *Vigilant*, then visiting Tamatave. After staying three or four weeks at the coast, the queen and her retinue returned to Antanànarìvo; but her journey, although it probably answered its purpose politically, did harm rather than good to her health, and she appeared to grow worse from the time she arrived at the capital in the autumn of the year. After a lingering illness of several months, during which everything was done that Dr. Davidson's skill and experience could suggest, she died on the 1st of April, 1868, to the sincere regret both of her own subjects and of the foreign residents. Her short reign of about five years was a most peaceful and prosperous one for the country. Christianity, education, and civilisation had progressed wonderfully, owing to the generally liberal policy of her government. To her own people she was endeared by her humanity, and her constant desire to lessen the oppressive burdens imposed upon them by her predecessors; while every European resident or visitor could testify to the kindness and courtesy she had always shown to foreigners.

The remarkable ceremonial observed at her funeral, as well as those common at all royal obsequies, have already been described in speaking of Malagasy funeral rites. Our account of customs connected with royalty in Madagascar

may therefore be appropriately concluded by a few particulars as to the observances at the accession of Malagasy sovereigns, and by a description of the coronation ceremonies. The word "coronation," however, is not a correct translation of the native term for the occasion when the sovereign is publicly recognised by the people as their ruler. A crown, indeed, has only been used subsequent to the reign of Rànavàlona I., probably through the love of her successor Radàma for European usages; and the ceremony is termed *fisehòana*, *i.e.* "the showing," or appearance before the nation. In former times it generally took place at the Imàhamàsina, the spacious area in the plain at the western base of the city hill; but each of the late female sovereigns has been crowned or recognised by their subjects at Àndohàlo, within the city. The two Radàmas both chose Imàhamàsina as the scene of the ceremonial; but as they each died early in life, a superstitious prejudice seemed to arise against the use of the ancient place of consecration, and the sacred stone of Àndohàlo was substituted for that in the plain below.

At the fisehòana of Rànavàlona I., in June 1829, an imposing display of military force was made, and the recognition of the idolatry of the country was a prominent feature of the ceremony; the object of the government being to show the attachment of the queen to ancient usages, and her determination and ability to maintain them by force, if necessary. "When the queen entered the place of assembly, she was carried towards the sacred stone; having ascended it, she stood facing the east, being surrounded by five generals, each holding his hat in one hand and a drawn sword in the other, the band at the same time playing the national air. The queen then demanded, '*Masina, masina, masina v'aho?*'—*i.e.* 'Am I

consecrated, consecrated, consecrated?' The five generals replied in the affirmative. Then all the crowd shouted, 'Long may you live, Queen Rànavàlona!' The queen then, descending from the stone, took the idols Manjàka-tsiròa and Fantàka into her hands, saying to them, 'My predecessors have given you to me; I put my trust in you, therefore support me.' Delivering them into the hands of their keepers, she was then borne to a platform erected at a little distance from the stone.

"The royal chair or throne was covered with scarlet cloth, richly adorned with gold lace; here the queen took her seat, surrounded by her relatives, the heir-apparent and the infant daughter of Radàma being close to her. On the east and west sides of the platform sat the judges, the civil and military officers, and nobles. At the western corners the two idols of the sovereign were held up by their respective keepers. They were covered and ornamented with a quantity of scarlet and gold-embroidered cloth, which was viewed by the people with a superstitious awe, and formed a prominent feature in the scene. It was estimated that about sixty thousand people were assembled on the occasion, eight thousand being soldiers. The troops were massed together in columns, and lined the road leading from Àndohàlo to the palace. In a square space in front of the platform, the bands were placed, as well as the wives of the late sovereign and of the judges and officers.

"After remaining seated for a short time the queen rose, leaning upon her eldest sister, whom she requested to receive the hasina, or money presented as a mark of allegiance. She then addressed the immense assembly to the following effect: '*Velòma Zàna-dralàmbo, Velòma Zànakandrian-dròroka,*' etc., *i.e.* 'I salute you' (the different

clans or tribes mentioned in the order of their rank); and continued, 'If you have never known me before, it is I, Rànavàlona, who now appear before you.' The people shouted, 'Hoo! Hoo!' Then she said: 'God gave the kingdom to my ancestors; they transferred it to Andrianimpòin-Imérina, and he again to Radàma, on condition that I should be his successor. Is it not so, Ambàniàndro?'—a name given to the people, meaning literally 'under-the-day.' All replied, 'It is so.' Again she added: 'I will not change what Radàma and my ancestors have done, but I will add to what they did. Do not think that because I am a woman I cannot govern the kingdom. Never say, 'She is a woman, weak and ignorant; she is unable to rule over us.' My greatest solicitude and study shall always be to promote your welfare, and to make you happy. Do you hear that, Ambàniàndro?' All replied, 'Yes.'

"Rainimahày, the prime minister, then rose, and after saluting the queen, turned to the people and addressed them, saying they could put every confidence in their sovereign, and repeated to them the speech she had just delivered, with some appropriate observations on it. Then the first tribe, called Zana-dralàmbo, rose up, and one of their chiefs addressed the queen, assuring her of their fidelity, and presented a Spanish dollar as their hasina. Then the different clans, in order of precedence, did the same; then the people of different provinces and districts, through their representatives; then some Arabs from Muscat, then the Europeans, and lastly the generals, as heads of the army. Ravàlonsalàma, the senior officer, speaking on behalf of the rest, assured her majesty that the army would be found faithful in supporting her throne. It was observed that the queen personally thanked only the Europeans and the military. She had appointed a place

for the former near to the platform, and two hundred soldiers to protect them from the pressure of the multitude.

"The ceremony being finished, the procession returned to the palace by a different route. The firing of cannon announced the queen's arrival home. Having reached the courtyard of the Tràno Vòla, she left her palanquin, and, standing near the tomb of Radàma, took the flags of the two idols into her hands, and offered a short prayer to her late husband, concluding with the words, 'May thy name ever be respected!' The officers and troops were then dismissed, while the queen retired to her own house."*

It will be seen from the foregoing account that there was no actual crowning of the sovereign, but a recognition of her authority by the representatives of the people. A short description of the dress in which the queen appeared may interest some of our readers:—

"The queen's hair was dressed according to the Hova mode, in numerous small plaits. On the crown of her head she wore an ornament resembling a piece of coral, consisting of five branches, to each of which a red stone and a piece of gold resembling a small bell were attached. The end of the coral was fixed in a mother-of-pearl shell, placed above the forehead. To this was fastened a fine gold chain of native manufacture, which was wound several times round the head. The queen wore three necklaces, of coral, cornelian, and red stone; three bracelets on each arm, of pearls, crystal, and coral. Besides these, she wore a scarf adorned with cornelian, and had anklets of precious stones, and ear-rings and finger-rings of the same costly materials. The queen's upper dress, or *rànzo*, was of purple silk embroidered with gold lace and buttons. The *kitàmb*, or lower dress, was of white silk; her mantle of fine scarlet

* "History of Madagascar," vol. ii. p. 424.

cloth, ornamented similarly to the rànzo; stockings of white silk and yellow morocco shoes completed her costume, and her forehead was marked with white clay—called *tàny-ràvo*, or 'joyful earth,' when thus used."

The progress made in intelligence and in respect for Christianity during the reign of Ràsohèrina, was shown in a remarkable abandonment of many ancient customs at the coronation of the present queen, Rànavàlona II. Heathen herself in opinion and preference, but destitute to a great extent of the strong will and force of character which marked her predecessor, she was unable to resist the wishes of her government that the childish follies and superstitions of heathenism should be put away. I am indebted to my friends the Revds. W. E. and G. Cousins for the following particulars of the ceremony, which passed off with the greatest success, and was generally regarded by Europeans as the best-arranged thing of the kind which has ever taken place in Madagascar.

A lofty and spacious platform was erected in Àndohàlo, and on the morning of Thursday, the 3rd of September, the large triangular area was filled at an early hour by many thousands of the people from all the provinces of the kingdom. Every piece of rising ground was crowded with spectators. Soon after nine a procession left the palace, consisting of the members of the government, public officials, civil and military, and a hundred ladies dressed in European fashion. They walked, escorting the queen in her palanquin to the platform, where she took her seat under a splendid canopy, after walking over the sacred stone. This canopy was supported on pillars coloured green, with gilded mouldings, and hung with green and gold velvet The dome-shaped roof was of scarlet velvet, ornamented with silver spear-heads. On the four sides were inscribed

the mottoes, "Glory to God," "Peace on earth," "Goodwill to men," "God be with us," in the native language. At the queen's right hand was a small table, on which lay a handsomely-bound Malagasy Bible, sent to Radàma II. a few years ago, and also a copy of the Laws of Madagascar. The queen wore a white satin dress, embroidered with crowns in gold, in the making of which it is said sixty native workpeople had been employed for a long time. Around her majesty were the scarlet-clothed ladies of the royal family, and the members of the English and French missions. The prime minister, as first subject, took his place among the people below.

The chief point of interest undoubtedly was the absence of all idols or charms, for Rànavàlona II. is the first Malagasy sovereign who has been crowned without these heathen appendages. A white silk flag, with the initials of her majesty's name, and a royal crown superseded the idolatrous emblems, while the presence of the Christian Bible and mottoes from the Word of God were a striking declaration of the change produced in public opinion since the death of the first queen of that name, only seven years before, when Christianity was proscribed, and its professors cruelly persecuted.

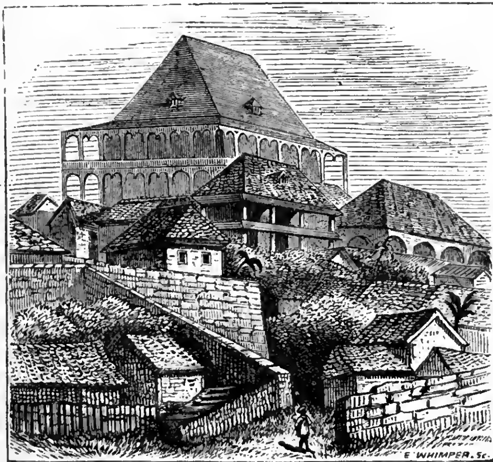
The queen delivered an impressive speech, declaring her intention to rule justly and mercifully, and reciting, as usual, her descent from the ancient sovereigns. This speech, which was previously printed at the mission-press for distribution among the people, is an interesting proof of the progress recently made, while the sentiments it embodies are honourable to the good sense and practical wisdom which dictated it. In speaking of the benefits of law and good government, and of obedience to the laws of the country, two passages of Scripture are quoted: "For

the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light;" and "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright," etc. Addressing her people, the queen said, "O ye under heaven here assembled, I have father and mother, having you; therefore may you live, may God bless you!" Speaking of the members of the government, the judges and chief officers, she said: "I have made them fathers of the people, and leaders to teach them wisdom." She reminded them that the law did not respect persons, that it was not she nor they who would condemn evildoers or rebels to death, but the laws, which both were bound to maintain. The sentence in which she alluded to Christianity was as follows: "And as to the praying, it is not compulsory, nor is there any hindrance, for God made you."

After the usual presentation of hasina, which occupied a considerable time, together with speeches and assurances of loyalty, the proceedings were closed by a most energetic and well-received speech from the prime minister, whose address was in some parts very much like a sermon upon the second of the texts quoted by the queen. The proceedings lasted about five hours, and it was estimated that between two and three hundred thousand people were present.

On the following day the queen went down to Imàhamàsina, which was filled with people gathered together for amusement. As soon as the queen had taken her place, a general dancing commenced, or what is called dancing. Hats and hands were waved, and everyone's body was in motion, the queen standing up and answering the people by a continual movement of her hands. The women formed in ranks one behind the other, and stretching out their arms, just moved the hand, making a corresponding motion with the feet. The effect was strange and amusing, without

the energy and enthusiasm of English merrymaking; it was rather exciting nevertheless. For about three hours different parties came and danced before the queen, and then the assembly broke up. Other amusements were carried on—singing extempore verses, sham spear-fighting, etc.; but the greatest order and decorum prevailed, and there was a remarkable absence of licentious or drunken revelry.



PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE, ANTANÀNARÌVO.

CHAPTER XIII.

MALAGASY IDOLATRY AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF.

Character of Malagasy idolatry—The chief idols—Significance of their names—Fàdy or taboo—Appearance of the idols—Sacrifices—Idolatry less powerful than other forms of superstition—The tangèna ordeal—Sorcery—The sàmpy or household god—Drury's account of the religious customs—Atonement by blood-shedding—Sacrifices—Human sacrifices—Fàditra or atonement—Sòrona—Divination—Worship of ancestors and of departed sovereigns—Traces of ideas of one Supreme Being—Idolatry of modern introduction—Interesting proverbs and ancient sayings.

THERE are, perhaps, few more interesting subjects of inquiry, to the philosopher or the Christian, than the religious beliefs and observances of those peoples who have not enjoyed the light of Revelation; and this interest is, if possible, increased in the case of nations who have for ages been almost isolated from the outer world, and have thus had no opportunity of receiving higher religious ideas from an external source. The downward tendency of all man-made systems of belief is universally seen; and whether amongst civilised or savage tribes, the Scripture declaration is fulfilled, that "the world by wisdom knew not God," and a negative is given to the question, "Can man by searching find Him out? Can he find out the Almighty to perfection?" There is something very remarkable in the variety of the strength and influence which these natural religions exercise upon their adherents. While some nations—as, for instance, the Hindoos—are essentially religious in their mental habits, others have almost lost the very idea of a spiritual existence.

The people of Madagascar occupy a middle place between these two extremes. They differ considerably from other heathen nations in their religious beliefs, and in the extent to which their idolatry affects their habits and feelings and everyday life. To a stranger newly arrived in the country, and travelling through it, there seems a remarkable absence of any outward sign of idolatrous worship. In India, in China, in Siam, temples meet the eye wherever there is, or has been, any population to attend their rites. The religious ceremonies and observances and restrictions affect to a greater or less degree every act and feeling of the people. Take away their religion and all that is connected with it, and these Asiatic nations would be essentially different from what they now are. And this remark applies with greater or less force to almost all heathen peoples; but in Madagascar, there is hardly anything outwardly to remind us that we are in an idolatrous country. There are no gorgeous temples, no carved and painted images, no organised worship, no priesthood; and the few sacrifices which are offered are presented at irregular and rare intervals. Venerable systems of worship like Brahminism and Buddhism have no place; caste, pilgrimage, penances, costly offerings, self-mortification, all are ideas strange to the Malagasy mind. Yet there is an idolatry, and there are religious ceremonies and observances which are worth attention, as illustrating that "feeling after God" which is common to all mankind, however degraded and ignorant they may be.

Our acquaintance with Malagasy idolatry is chiefly confined to its development amongst the Hovas and other tribes connected with them, in the central part of the island. The information given upon the subject by the few travellers who have penetrated to other parts of the in-

terior, is too scanty and often inaccurate, from imperfect knowledge of the language, to be of much service; yet, as far as can be gathered from these scattered notices, there appears a general similarity in the religious observances and beliefs of the people all over the country.

There are ten or twelve principal idols venerated in the capital and the central province, and of these, three or four are regarded as the chief. Each is supposed to have some special power and influence, and to take charge of certain interests, protecting from particular evils, and bestowing blessings peculiarly its own upon its worshippers.

The idol Rakèlimalàza is considered the first, and is venerated as the guardian of the sovereign and the kingdom. Its name consists of two Malagasy adjectives (somewhat opposed in their meaning, but, by a not infrequent usage of the language, combined and mutually qualifying, with the prefix "Ra," making them a proper name), and signifies "little, yet renowned." The benefits said to be conferred by this idol are, rendering the sovereign universally victorious, and protecting from fire, crocodiles, and sorcery.

Next, perhaps, to this in popular estimation, is the idol Ramàhavàly, who is regarded as the Æsculapius of the Malagasy. From it charms used to be brought to the sick as the most effectual remedy for disease. On the occasion of troops being sent to war in distant provinces, and also when epidemics have caused unusual mortality, the idol has been carried through the ranks of the soldiery, and in the midst of a solemn public assembly of the people, as the surest way of preventing and arresting disease. Holy water was sprinkled by the idol's keepers and guardians, and was regarded very much in the same light as a similar custom is by Romanists.

Ramàhavàly's patronage of serpents has been already alluded to. This connection of the serpent with the healing art is another instance of that association of the two, of which the mythologies of other heathen nations furnish many examples. The name of this idol is beautiful and suggestive; it means, "one who is able to answer." In the early days of the Protestant mission, as well as in more recent times, this name has furnished an appropriate text for speaking upon the folly and sin of idolatry, and of turning away the attention of the people from this lying vanity to Him who is indeed "the hearer and answerer of prayer."

The idols Fantàka and Manjàka-tsi-ròa are more especially the guardians of the sovereign and the royal family. The former is kept at the old capital, Ambòhimànga—the latter at the present seat of government, Antanànarìvo. The name Manjàka-tsi-ròa is singularly appropriate to the formerly despotic and arbitrary character of the monarchy of Madagascar. It means "there are not two sovereigns," and was significant of the jealous feeling which led both Radàma I. and Rànavàlona to put down every other claimant to power in the island, at whatever cost of suffering and life to their own immediate subjects.

Another idol of some celebrity was Rànakandrìana, which is kept at Andrìngitra, a mountain about thirty miles to the north-west of the capital. His dwelling-place was a cave near the summit, and he was reputed to be able to reply to those saluting him. One of his altars being erected opposite certain rocks which give an echo, may probably have given rise to this idea. However this may be, the circumstance was made use of by the keepers of the idol to increase its fame, and consequently their emoluments. The following anecdote is related of Radàma I., who was too

shrewd an observer to believe all the lying wonders by which most of his people were deceived. The king, being aware of the reputed fame of this idol for answering those who saluted him, resolved to visit his altar in order to ascertain the truth of the report. On arriving at the spot he entered the dark cavern, the supposed residence of Rànakandrìana, and saluted the invisible divinity. A low and solemn voice answered, " *Tsàra hiàny* "—" very well ". He then offered to present a small donation of money, and on a hand being gently moved forward in the gloom to accept the offering of the monarch, the king instantly seized it, and exclaimed, " This is no God—this is a human being!" He immediately gave orders to his followers to drag out the impostor; and thus the spell was broken in the minds of many, and the disbelief of the king in the superstitions of his country confirmed.*

Another of the idols has a name singularly significant of the power supposed to belong to it; it is called Rakèlimanjàka-lànitra, *i. e.* " little, but ruling the heavens;" and is supposed to be able to protect the rice-crops from hail, by changing it into rain, and thus bringing benefits instead of injuries to its worshippers.

There are certain things and acts to which every Malagasy idol is supposed to have a dislike or antipathy. Such objects or practices are called its *fàdy*, a term very similar in import to the well-known *taboo* or *tapu* of the South Sea islanders. The fàdy is, however, far less oppressive and annoying than the taboo, as exercised at the pleasure of the New Zealand and other Polynesian chiefs. These restrictions are often of a most absurd and trivial character. Rakèlimalàza was said to dislike guns and gunpowder, onions, goats, horses, cats, and owls, and especially pigs.

* " History of Madagascar," vol. i. p. 411.

In Queen Rànavàlona's time, all pigs were sent away to a distance of several miles from the capital. This restriction was disregarded during the short reign of Radàma II., but upon the accession of the late queen, the pigs were once more banished, and none were to be found within a day's journey of Antanànarivo. Closely connected with the supposed antipathy of the idol to cats and owls, is the superstitious feeling of the people with regard to these animals. Both are considered as creatures of ill-omen, and anyone keeping the native cat is still regarded by many people as a sorcerer.

During my homeward journey from the capital to Tamatave, I stopped one evening at the village of Ambòdinifòdy. Entering a house where I purposed staying for the night, I was met at the door by the owner, who inquired if I, or any of my bearers, had any *tavòlo* (arrowroot) with us; for that, he said, was fàdy, or offensive, to his household god. Upon my assuring him that neither I nor my servants carried any of it with our provisions, he made no further objection to my taking up my quarters for the night in his dwelling.

The question is frequently asked, What are the idols like, as to their form? It is difficult to give any very confident answer to this inquiry; in the first place, the idols are not exposed for the veneration of the people, and then it is considered impious even to look upon them. Few of the Malagasy can give any definite reply to questions upon this subject, but it is believed that some of the chief idols are pieces of wood carved into a rude resemblance of a human form. They are of no great size, probably not much exceeding a foot in length, and are, in some cases at least, kept in boxes, which are deposited in a house set apart for the use of the idol. One of these gods is said to be an insect, or an imitation of one, and another is re-

ported to be a meteoric stone. This has probably obtained a reputation for sanctity similar to that ascribed to the image at Ephesus, which was supposed to have fallen from Jupiter. Whenever brought out upon public occasions, the idols are fastened to the top of a pole, and are usually

MALAGASY IDOL.
Copied, by permission, from a Drawing in "History of Madagascar"

covered with scarlet cloth or velvet. In some cases these coverings are ornamented with silver chains, and small objects made in the shape of crocodile's teeth. At the head of the procession walks a man with a spear, shouting to the people to retire out of the way to the side of the road; until a recent period this requirement was generally com-

plied with, most persons waiting respectfully, with heads uncovered, until the idol and its attendants had passed by.

Mrs. Ellis thus describes the appearance of some of the idols which were borne in procession at the coronation of Radàma II.: "In the latter part of the way I was behind the idols, and at one time quite surrounded by them. They were about thirteen in number, and were carried on tall slender poles about ten feet high. There was in most of them little resemblance to anything in heaven or in earth: dirty pieces of silver chain, silver balls from the size of a marble to that of a hen's egg, pieces of coral or bone, or silver ornaments intended to represent shark's teeth, with narrow strips of scarlet cloth one or two feet long—some of them half concealed under what might have been a cap of liberty or an old red nightcap, and others tied up in a bag of native cloth or small rush-basket. Such were the objects on which the security and prosperity of the nation were formerly supposed to depend."*

The spread of Christianity in the capital and its neighbourhood was operating powerfully, even during the reign of the professedly heathen queen Ràsohèrina, to bring idol-worship into neglect and contempt. Only once during the whole time of my residence in Antanànarivo did I catch a glimpse of these national gods when carried in public. This single occasion was not many weeks after my arrival, and upon inquiry I found the smallpox had lately caused much mortality, and that the idol-keepers, hoping to retain the fame of Rakèlimalàza as the national protector, had brought it in procession through the city, passing through the different gateways, at which charms were deposited, in the hope that by its influence the disease might be arrested.

* "Madagascar, its Social and Religious Progress," by Mrs. Ellis (1863).

All I could see was a small roll of soiled scarlet velvet, about a foot or so in length, fixed to a light pole and carried by a man at the head of a small party of the idol's worshippers. They kept up a low monotonous chant, very much resembling that which is used to pay honour to the sovereign when appearing in public.

In travelling through Imérina and the neighbouring provinces, we frequently come upon villages, built, unlike the majority of Malagasy country-houses, not of clay, but of wood. In many cases these are the places where idols are kept; and within the innermost hàdy, or fosse, no clay house is permitted to be erected. A house in the centre of the village is appropriated to the idol, and here is deposited the box in which it is usually kept. These houses are not temples for sacrifice, nor places for worship; and no stated times are observed for religious ceremonies in connection with them. The idols are mostly brought to the people, instead of the people resorting to them. Sacrifices, if they can be called such, when offered, are not made in or near to the idol's house, but rather upon certain stones, sometimes outside the village, or at one of the ancient graves of the Vazímba, the former inhabitants of Ankòva.

I was told that, in some cases, the following ceremony used to be observed. The idol-keeper having called the people of the village and neighbourhood together, entered the house, carefully closing the door, and taking great precautions that no one but himself was present. After certain prayers he opened the box, and taking the idol from its place, anointed it with the oil of the castor-oil plant, which grows abundantly in the island. After further invocations the image was restored to its resting-place, and the people

who were seated around the house were informed that the divinity was propitiated, and that the blessings supplicated would certainly be granted.

It is difficult for those now residing in the capital to form a very clear idea of the exact influence which the idolatry of the Malagasy has exerted upon the native mind. Christianity has been so leavening the community, especially during the last few years, that it is now almost impossible to learn what the idolatry of the Hovas really was, and how far it affected their feelings and daily life. But we cannot help thinking that this very fact shows that the worship of these false gods of Madagascar—or, more correctly speaking, of Imérina—never had that all-absorbing and intimate connection with the people's habits and thoughts and affections which we find in most heathen countries. Perhaps idolatry, strictly so called, has never been so influential upon the Malagasy mind as other forms of superstition. Witchcraft, divination, charms, and the veneration of the *sàmpy*, or household god, have probably been far more powerful agencies than the worship of the more celebrated idols. The native mind is full of crude conceptions, vague superstitious fears, and belief in sorcery, destiny, and in ghosts and apparitions. The belief in witchcraft is deeply rooted in the Malagasy, and all kinds of evil are ascribed to its influence. To test suspected persons, the tangèna, or poison-ordeal, has, until recently, been used from time immemorial.

The tangèna was administered not only to those suspected of sorcery, but also to political offenders and to those accused of being favourable to Christianity. And such was the national feeling of its infallibility as a test of guilt, that innocent people would not only submit to it, but even demand that it should be given to them in cases where

the slightest suspicion could be attached to them. It was believed that the spirit or genius of the tangèna was a kind of "searcher of hearts," and that he would enter with the poison into the stomach of the accused, punishing the evil-doer, while the innocent would escape. The tangèna nut appears to be a most powerful poison, but it acts only as a violent emetic if taken in minute doses. Innocence was held to be proved by the rejection of three small pieces of the skin of a fowl, which were swallowed whole. The accused first ate a quantity of rice, after which the administration was made by scraping a portion of the nut into the juice of a banana. The *mpanòzon-dòha*, or curser, then placed his hand upon the head of the accused, and proceeded to offer a prayer to the spirit of the tangèna, who was thus invoked :—"Hear, hear, hear, and hearken well, O thou Raimànamàngo!" (searcher, trier, or test); "thou art a round egg made by God. Though thou hast no eyes, yet thou seest; though thou hast no ears, yet thou hearest; though thou hast no mouth, yet thou answerest; therefore hear, and hearken well, O Raimànamàngo!"

The whole prayer is too long for insertion; it is full of repetitions and terrible imprecations; but the main idea is to implore that, if sorcery had been practised, the guilt might be made manifest; but that if the accused were innocent, the poison might cause the three pieces to be rejected uninjured. It is evident, however, that the whole system was marked by deception and trickery, as well as cruelty. The curser, by a variation in the quantity of the nut given, or in the time elapsing between taking the rice, the poison, and the draughts of rice-water drunk to promote sickness, was able materially to influence the chances of the pieces of skin being returned uninjured or returned at all. Should they not be found in the rice rejected by vomiting, the

culprit was beaten to death with the rice-pestle, and the corpse dragged away in the most degrading manner to a hasty burial, or sometimes left to be devoured by the dogs. The relatives of the accused frequently had to pay a fine in addition to the confiscation of all his property, and were obliged to clear themselves of any complicity with his crime by a public abjuration. The whole trial was accompanied by a good deal of solemnity and ceremony, and was well calculated to impress an ignorant and superstitious people with a profound dread of the power of the spirit supposed to be connected with the poisonous nut. It often happened that, even if the accused person were pronounced innocent, the poison produced serious results, and occasionally caused death.

It was computed that, before its disuse, after the death of Rànavàlona, the tangèna caused the death of a fiftieth part of the whole population—an average number of 3000 persons falling victims every year to the belief in the ordeal. It is therefore a matter for sincere congratulation that the progress of Christianity and intelligence has caused the total abolition of this terribly destructive custom.

It may be inquired, what was the practice of sorcery which exposed the offender to such an ordeal as the tangèna? It is really difficult to answer the question, through the dread of the people at having anything to do with those who might be accused or suspected of making the *òdy-mahèry*, or "powerful spell." It is supposed, however, that this charm consisted in the imprecation of evil upon the person whom the sorcerer wished to injure; and, connected with this, was the procuring of certain objects, as the leaves of different plants which were supposed to possess magical power, or even the veriest rubbish might do, and then

burying these articles near the dwelling of the obnoxious person.

In popular language, anyone who had been guilty of extraordinary crime was supposed to be bewitched, as it was argued that he would not have committed such an offence except under some powerful evil influence. So, also, the firmness and courage of the Christian confessors were attributed to a potent spell, which enabled them obstinately to resist the laws of the queen, and to continue faithful in the practice of their religion. And many of them, on this account, were condemned to the punishment of the sorcerer—viz., hurling from a precipice.

It appears also to have been a common practice for wickedly-disposed persons to frighten others, whom they wished to injure, by causing certain things to be laid at the door of the house, or fixed to some part of the building. Mr. Ellis showed me several small baskets, partially burnt, containing pieces of meteoric stone, charred wood, and other worthless objects, but all having some symbolical meaning, which were placed near his house by the chiefs of the reactionary heathen party, shortly before the revolution in 1863. His native friends assured him that these were presages and threatenings of death and various calamities, which no doubt the senders would have endeavoured to fulfil had not their schemes been frustrated by the precautions of the prime minister and his adherents. With a superstitious people it is evident that such warnings might sometimes cause the very evils dreaded, by the mere apprehensions of danger which they would excite.

The national idols are probably derived from the sàmpy, or household god, and their worship is most likely but an extension of the fame of some few to which circumstances have given special importance. These sàmpys are found

in most heathen houses, and are often merely a piece of wood or stone or grass, or other equally worthless object; and are frequently kept in a kind of plaited straw basket, in shape somewhat resembling a small bottle, and generally suspended to the north wall of the house, near the bedstead, which occupies the north-east corner. Sometimes the sampy is a small figure of silver, rudely resembling a bullock; in other cases it consists of a glass bead, or a collection of beads or other ornaments. These household gods or charms seem to be something like the Lares and Penates of the Romans, and the Teraphim of the Semitic races.

In some of the villages on the route from the eastern coast into the interior, I noticed in the centre of the square around which the houses were built, a piece of wood eight or nine feet high, formed from the fork of a tree—the branches tapering to a point, the lower end being fixed in the ground. This was smeared with blood and fat, and from what little I could learn about it from the people, it appeared to be an object of worship, or, at least, of special veneration. In some cases pieces of basalt were placed around it, and on these the libation or offering of blood was poured out. In one or two instances the skulls and horns of oxen were fixed to the pointed forks of the wood.

Drury's account of the religious customs of the tribes amongst whom he lived (1702–1717) makes no mention of any idol resembling those reverenced in Imérina. The chief object of worship appears to have been what he calls an "*owley.*" It is not very clear what this word means; perhaps it is a provincial corruption, or rather variation, of the Hova word *ody*, or charm. He says: "The inhabitants have in all their houses a small portable utensil, which is devoted to religious uses, and is a kind of house-

hold altar, which they call the *owley*. It is made of a peculiar wood, in small pieces, neatly joined, and making almost the form of a half-moon with the horns downward, between which are placed two alligator's teeth. This is adorned with various kinds of beads, and such a sash fastened to it as a man ties about his waist when he goes to war. I observed that they brought two forks from the woods, and fixed them in the ground, on which was laid a beam, slender at each end and about six feet long, with two or three pegs in it; and upon this they hung the owley. Behind it was a long pole, to which a bullock was fastened with a cord. They had a pan full of live coals, on which they threw an aromatic gum and planted it under the owley. Then they took a small quantity of hair from the tail, chin, and eyebrows of the ox, and put them on the owley. Then my master used some particular gestures, with a large knife in his hand, and made a formal prayer, in which the people joined. In the next place, they threw the ox on the ground, and my master cut his throat; for as there are no priests amongst them the chief man, whether of the country, town, or family, performs all divine offices himself."

Poor Drury, then a mere lad, narrowly escaped being killed by his master for refusing to join in this ceremony, or repeat the prayer or invocation used by the people; for he remarks: "As I thought this sort of worship to be downright idolatry, and that they paid their adorations to the owley, I resolutely told him that I would sooner die than pay divine homage to any false deity whatsoever." It was only at the intercession of his owner's brother that his life was spared.

In a conversation with one of his masters, some time after this occurrence, the Malagasy chief told him: "It is

not the wood nor the alligator's teeth that we worship, but there are certain guardian demons, who take care of all nations, families, and private persons; and should you be possessed of one of these owleys, and give it the name of some guardian spirit, it will undoubtedly attend you."

The patriarchal element in Malagasy idolatry is distinctly recognised in these early accounts, and confirms what was ascertained by the first Protestant missionaries. There has apparently never been a priesthood, properly so called, nor anything like an organised worship. Drury remarks: "There are no people here who pretend to be greater favourites of the Supreme Being than other men, and to have a particular commission to interpret and declare his will. No one has as yet been so presumptuous as to attempt this; and if anyone should be so hardy, he would meet with but few to credit him. Every man here, the poor man as well as the rich lord, is a priest for himself and his family." The political power of the numerous petty chiefs having been absorbed in the one sovereign of Madagascar, their sacerdotal office was naturally transferred to the same supreme ruler; so that, since the commencement of the present century, the king or queen has acted as the national high-priest at the Fandroàna and on other solemn occasions. Reference to some of these customs has already been made in describing the new year's festival and the sacred character of Malagasy royalty.

It is an interesting fact that the idea of blood having an efficacy to make atonement for sin, is a marked feature in the sacrifices occasionally offered by the people; and also that the inner fat of the victim was regarded, as in the Jewish ritual, as the most appropriate portion to be offered, together with the blood. In crossing many of the smaller streams, certain rocks in the midst of the current are often

seen smeared with fat, as a propitiatory offering to the guardian genius of the river. The upright stones fixed at the head of graves are anointed with blood and fat, as an offering to the spirits of the ancestors of the family. Even in the neighbourhood of the capital, many tombs are still honoured in this manner, as well as stones and pieces of rock, which are regarded as sacred; and the graves of the Vazìmba are similarly reverenced.

In the few sacrifices offered, a part only of the victim appears to be bùrnt or presented on the shapeless stones which serve for altars. In almost all cases the worshippers seem to have feasted upon the flesh, so that the whole service bore more the character of a peace or thank-offering than of a sacrifice for sin. The only exception to this remark is what is related by Drury in referring to the funeral rites of the people amongst whom he lived. He describes them as kindling four fires, one at each corner, outside their family burying-places, and on these burning an ox or cow, which had been divided into quarters, which were all consumed in the flames. After this, frankincense was sprinkled on the coals, which were scattered all about. It seems questionable whether the holocaust, or whole burnt-offering for sin, was recognised by the Malagasy generally.

Whatever may be sacrificed, it appears that all are free-will offerings, and not prescribed by law, but are presented when circumstances may seem to suggest the propriety of an offering being made to the idol. From this voluntary character of the service, the native words which are the nearest equivalent to our terms "altar" and "sacrifice" are derived—viz., *fivòadìana* and *fànalamboàdy*, *i.e.* the means or place of *vowing*, and the taking away or satisfying a *vow;* for most sacrifices are offered, or were formerly offered, in fulfilment of a promise to present certain animals

or other gifts, if the blessings implored from the guardian demon or idol were granted.

The Rev. David Jones thus describes the ceremony, which he witnessed in November 1818, of sacrificing a bullock at the beginning of rice-planting: "The animal was thrown down in the corner of a field, after which his four legs were tied together. On this occasion a woman named Senegala officiated as sacrificer. Having made a long prayer to Zanahary, the Supreme Being, she sprinkled the bullock with holy water from a horn, after which its throat was cut by one of the attendants, and it was cut up, to be divided in the evening amongst the rice-planters, so that all was eaten except the blood. This ceremony being over, all the people commenced planting their rice, and the flesh of the bullock was then divided among them. Before this the priestess put some arrack into a cup made of a leaf, and, stating that she presented it as a drink-offering, prayed the Angatra, a guardian spirit, to allow the rice to grow. She then placed the cup with the arrack in it in a safe place in the open field, that the Angatra might drink it for his satisfaction from time to time. As this evaporated in the sun and diminished, it was believed that the Angatra drank it, and this condescension was joyfully received as a proof that he was pleased, and would allow the rice to grow and prosper. It is a frequent custom with the Bétsimisàraka, before they drink spirits, to spill a little on the ground, to propitiate the Angatra, that he may not injure them.

"It was formerly believed that no human victims were ever slain, but subsequent information proves that in the province of Vangaidrano human sacrifices were at one time offered. The fact that such practices existed was for a long time disbelieved, being so contrary to the general

character of the people, nor was it credited until substantiated by repeated and unexceptionable testimonies. It appears that a weekly immolation took place; Friday was the fatal day; and, if possible, chiefs and principal men were obtained and put to death, as forming a more costly and therefore more acceptable sacrifice to this Moloch. The offerings were not made to an idol, strictly so called; but the victims were killed before an enormous pole, to the top of which were suspended *ody*, or charms; and the idea appears to have been that of averting evils and procuring benefits by means of incantations, with which these sacrifices were supposed to have some mysterious connection. The victims were speared on the spot, and devoured by dogs and birds."*

Connected with the Malagasy notions of sacrifice, there are two observances which may be here referred to, called *fàditra* and *sòrona*. A fàditra is anything appointed by the diviners to be thrown away or destroyed in order to avert evil. This devoted or accursed thing may be money, or ashes, or a fruit, or an animal. Whatever it may consist of, the evils which are deprecated are recounted over it, in the belief that the destruction or loss of the fàditra will involve the doing away of the calamities dreaded. If ashes are the fàditra, they are driven away by the wind; if money, it is cast into deep water; if a fruit, it is dashed to pieces on the ground; if an animal, it is borne away on the shoulders of a man to a distant place, the bearer at the same time imprecating the evils upon the head of the victim. It will immediately occur to everyone familiar with the Old Testament scriptures, that there is a remarkable similarity between this custom and that of the ordinance of the scapegoat, ceremonially bearing away the sins

* "History of Madagascar," vol. i. p. 422.

of the Jewish people on the day of atonement: so that the Malagasy idea of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God taking away the sins of the world, is that of a powerful fàditra bearing away the evil and suffering resulting from sin.

The idea of substitution seems clearly recognised in the practice of the fàditra, for in the form of words sometimes used there is distinct reference to this belief. It runs thus: "And the thanksgiving being finished, this on the right side is exchanged for the life of the sick man, is exchanged that it may be exchanged, is substituted that it may be substituted; this is devoted a hundred times, a thousand times, to avert all the evil from the sick person."

The sòrona consists chiefly of certain objects which are worn as a charm to obtain favours, such as beads or silver chains; but it is sometimes simply a sacrifice of a bullock, or fowls, or fruit, or even intrinsically worthless objects.

The practice of divination is probably of very ancient date. It is called *sikìdy*, a term whose origin is unknown, and consists in various arrangements of numbers in rows and columns, according to given rules, which can be worked like a game of chess or draughts, but in which there is also a certain amount of chance. The results of these combinations are looked upon as the answers of the idols to inquiries made to them. In sickness, in setting out upon a journey, in commencing any undertaking, or when in danger or exposed to any calamity, the oracle is worked to ascertain what is right to be done. There are various modes of working the process, too tedious and complicated to enumerate, but in most of them the seeds of the *fàno* are used for the purpose. The practice of divining by these means is traditionally said to have been communicated directly from God to one of the early kings, and from him

it has been transmitted to the present time. The late queen had a strong belief in the sikìdy as a means of supernatural guidance. Every year when she visited the ancient capital to pray at the tombs of her ancestors, the day and hour of departure, the exact road to be taken, and every circumstance of the journey, were determined by the *mpsikìdy*, or diviners, whose instructions were always implicitly attended to. These men, who are called *ombiasy* in some parts of the island, do not form any caste or order of privileged persons, nor do there seem to be any fixed rules for their appointment beyond a knowledge of methods employed in the process of divination.

A description of Malagasy idolatry would be very imperfect without some reference to the worship and reverence paid by the people to their departed ancestors. In this respect there is some resemblance between the customs of the Malagasy and those of the Chinese and other Asiatic peoples. We have already seen what are their notions of a future state, and how, in the reverence paid to their departed friends, some belief seems to be entertained in the existence of the spirit apart from the body, confirmed also by many of their fables and proverbs. The attention paid to their tombs and funeral rites testify to the honour in which they hold the dead, and this respect increases instead of diminishing with lapse of years. In some undefined and misty way, the spirits of the deceased relatives are supposed still to watch over and protect those who are left behind; prayers are offered to them, their assistance is supplicated, certain offerings are made at their tombs, and any command or wish of their ancestors is remembered and obeyed with scrupulous care. Drury remarks: "The veneration they have for the memory of their ancestors, and the assurance they have of their spirits always

existing, are apparent in almost every circumstance of the few religious ceremonies they perform."

This being the case with the ancestors of the people generally, it is still more prominent towards the predecessors of the sovereign. When we recollect the all but divine honour rendered to the living monarch, it is not wonderful that departed sovereigns were raised into demigods, and regarded as the guardians of the kingdom over which they formerly ruled. Until the present reign, prayers were addressed to the early kings by the sovereign upon all important occasions. To these beliefs was in some degree to be attributed the dislike and jealousy with which the old Queen Rànavàlona regarded Christianity and its adherents. She, in her ignorance, supposed that the names Jehovah and Jesus Christ were those of some of the illustrious ancestors of the Europeans, whom they were teaching her people to reverence, to the neglect of their own sovereign's predecessors. Christianity, therefore, had the appearance both of a political as well as a religious offence in her eyes; for not only were the idols disregarded, and their worship abandoned, but the famous ancestors of the queen, whose prowess had made the kingdom great and powerful, were dishonoured, and their names deprived of the respect and reverence justly due to them.

The late king, Radàma II., had also something of this jealous feeling towards his Christian subjects. He used to say that when his people became believers, or "praying ones," they began to love Christ better than they did himself, and his pride could not endure even a divine rival in the affections of his people.

But there is yet another important point to be considered in connection with Malagasy religious belief, and that is, that notwithstanding all the darkness and superstition

which have grown up through long ages of isolation from the outer world, the Malagasy have never altogether lost the idea of one true God; and this one Deity is acknowledged as above and superior to all idols. There are two names by which this Supreme Being is known; these are, Andriamànitra, and Àndrianànahàry, or Zànahàry. The first of these is, by some, supposed to be a corruption of Andriandanitra, or the "heavenly prince." This is, however, but a conjecture, and as the word stands it is a compound of *andrìana*, "noble" or princely, and *mànitra*, "fragrant." Possibly this may have been derived from the use of incense at some former period as a part of religious ceremonies. But the second name, Andrìanànahàry, certainly embodies a great truth. It means "the creating prince," and doubtless preserves one of those primeval truths concerning the nature of God which have come down from the earliest ages, probably from the time of the dispersion of the human family.

Àndriamànitra is the word most used in the interior; the other is more common upon the coast, but both are frequently joined together, and are thus used by Christian natives in prayer. These names of God are in constant use among the people generally, the common salutation or farewell being, "*Ho tahin Àndriamànitra anie hianao*"—"May you be blessed by God!" In presenting tribute to the sovereign, both names are invoked to sanctify the gift and the receiver; and in proclamations and public proceedings, the two names are solemnly appealed to as the source of power and blessing. It is true that the word Àndriamànitra is used also for some created things, especially for any object possessing features of glory or mystery; but still there can be little doubt that these applications of the name are corruptions of a purer and nobler idea, which has, in the course of centuries, been gradually overlaid and almost lost in the

superstition and idolatry which have grown up around it. In some cases, perhaps, it is nothing more than a loose application of the word to inferior objects, just as we speak of a divine poem or painting, etc.

It appears probable that the present idolatrous system is of comparatively modern date. One of the early missionaries was informed, by an aged man, that the worship of the idol Ramàhavàly had been introduced within the memory of old people still living at that time. Drury's narrative, to which such frequent reference has been made in this chapter, as one of the earliest and most trustworthy accounts of the people, confirms this opinion. He says: "They acknowledge indeed, and adore, the only one Supreme God, whom they call Dean Unghorray" (evidently Àndrianànahàry is here meant,—Drury's spelling of Malagasy words is very curious), "which signifies 'the Lord above.' There are, according to their notion, four other sovereign lords, and each superintends one quarter of the world. Of these, the Lord of the East, they say, dispenses plagues and calamities amongst mankind, by the command, or permission at least, of the great God. The others also are subservient to his commands, but are chiefly dispensers of his favours and blessings. They look upon these four as mediators between men and the Supreme Being; on which account they have a peculiar regard for them, and in their prayers and sacrifices recommend themselves to their indulgence and protection." A further confirmation may be found in the fact that there is nothing corresponding to a mythology, or any fables of gods or goddesses, amongst the Malagasy. Without any written language before it was given to them by English missionaries, they have no sacred books, neither has tradition handed down any such stories as are interwoven with Hindooism and other Asiatic idolatries.

In addition to these dim ideas of one Supreme Being, there is another most interesting fact connected with the subject—viz., that there are numerous proverbs and ancient sayings which embody several great truths respecting the nature and attributes of a God. When the ignorance and superstition of the people generally are remembered, these proverbial sayings seem very remarkable, and may surely be considered as vestiges of a purer and primeval faith, which have survived the lapse of centuries, and are still preserved in the common talk of the Malagasy. The true God has thus not "left himself without" some "witness" even in the daily speech of the people. One of the proverbs runs thus: "Aza ny lohasaha mangingina no heverina, fa Andriamànitra no ambony ny loha"—literally, "Do not consider the quiet (or secret) valley, for God is overhead." The language is very elliptical in character, and frequently requires in a translation another word or two to complete the sense; but the great truth is evidently recognised here, that God is omniscient, and that evil done in secret is naked and open to his observation. The same idea is embodied in another, which declares, "God beholds from on high, and sees that which is concealed;" while another says plainly, "There is nothing unknown to God."

That God is the ruler and disposer of events is acknowledged in another proverb, "The wilfulness of man can be borne by the Creator, for God alone bears rule." His justice is taught by the saying, "God hates evil; God is not to be blamed, the Creator is not to be censured;" while His approval of the good-doer, though he may wait long, is embodied in another proverb, "Though men wait not for God, yet will I wait for Him." That God punishes the evildoer is involved in the saying, "Better be guilty with men than guilty before God." These and other proverbial sayings give to the Christian teacher something of a

groundwork to rest upon in teaching a fuller knowledge of this one true God. As St. Paul in preaching to the Athenians quoted their own poets, so can English missionaries in addressing the Malagasy sometimes illustrate Scripture truth by reference to the proverbs of their ancestors, proving, from their own sayings, that the God whose gospel is preached to them is not a new Deity, not the God exclusively of the Europeans, but the one Creator of all, "who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

There is a common saying frequently repeated by the people, which speaks of "God, who created us with hands and feet," these members of the body being evidently the representatives of all the physical powers and faculties with which we are endowed. Before dismissing the subject of proverbs there is yet another worth mentioning, which is, "Ny atòdy tsy misy, fa ny ataò mivèrina"—that is, "There is no retribution; still, the past returns." This appears at first sight a contradiction or an enigma, but on further consideration it is not difficult to see that in it is involved the great truth, that sin is its own punishment; that though God were to leave the sinner alone, his evildoing would prove its own scourge; and is but another version of the Scripture declaration, that "God requireth that which is past."

The proverbs above mentioned were, with others, introduced with happy effect in a sermon by one of the English missionaries at the opening of the first memorial church at the capital in January 1867. Taking the text, "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship Him declare I unto you," the preacher showed to the vast congregation, amongst whom were numbers of heathen, that their ancestors had some knowledge of the true God; proving to them, as it were out of their own mouths, that God was the creator,

the allseeing, the omniscient, and the rewarder of good and evil. It was impossible not to see the astonishment with which the people listened to these familiar sayings proceeding from the lips of a foreigner; while he proceeded to show how defective, after all, this knowledge was, how it was mingled with foolish and superstitious beliefs, and how the Gospel of Christ alone could supply that which would make them wise unto salvation.

While these ancient sayings embody much that is true, it is hardly necessary to point out that although God's justice and God's hatred to sin are declared, no proverb teaches how sin can be pardoned, how the heart can be renewed, or how eternal happiness is to be secured. As to all the great essential truths of salvation, the heathen Malagasy still need to have declared to them that "Glad tidings of great joy which is for all people," and which is to all who truly receive it "the power of God and the wisdom of God."

Whilst this work has been at press intelligence has been received of the destruction of the national idols of the country. This has given an opportunity never before afforded of ascertaining definitely their appearance. In the month of September, 1869, the keepers of the chief idol, Rakèlimalàza, came to the capital to claim their supposed rights as nobles. The government immediately called a council of officers, and decided to send the chief secretary of state, with others high in rank, to the idol's village, before the return of its keepers, to burn the idol. Mr. William Pool thus describes the scene:—

"On arriving at the village the first thing was to read the prime minister's letter and secure possession of the idol's house. This done, a fire was kindled with the materials of the fence which surrounded the house, and had been pulled down by the queen's orders on the day she laid the corner-stone of the chapel royal. Then first the long cane called Tsotsonàraka, which usually preceded the idol in processions or journeyings, was cast into the fire; then twelve bullocks' horns, from which the sacred sprinklings were made; three scarlet umbrellas followed, and the silk lamba, or loose-flowing garment, which concealed the idol when suspended on the person of its keeper when it travelled.

The idol's case succeeded; this case was made of the trunk of a small tree hollowed, having a lid or cover fitted to it; and lastly the idol itself; on seeing which the people said, 'You cannot burn him, he is a god!' To which the Christian officer replied: 'If he be a god he will not burn; we are going to try.' And when enveloped in flames one of them held it up on a stick to show it was burning.

"It seems scarcely anyone of the present generation had ever seen this great idol; all seem astonished at its insignificance. The prime minister told me it was about the length and size of his second finger to the second joint. The following description I have is on good authority. The idol consisted altogether of two thicknesses of scarlet silk, about three feet long and three inches wide, having a small piece of wood of the size before named inserted in the middle between the silks in such a manner that by turning the silks a little way the point of the wood could be made to touch water or anything else that was to be sanctified; at either extremity of the silk a silver chain was sewn or fastened equal in length to the width of the silk.

"The sovereign's idol was said to consist of a small quantity of sand tied in cloth. Ratsimàhalàhy consisted of three round pieces of wood, about six inches long, that in the centre being about one-and-a-quarter inch in diameter, while the two outside pieces were each little more than half an inch in diameter. These were fastened together by a silver chain, which I have in my possession. It was kept in a round box about twenty inches high and ten inches in diameter, similar to the one already described, in which case there were forty-six pieces of idols deposited. This idol was sanctified once every year, about the beginning of our September, by the sprinkling of the blood of a red cock on it. It had a stick about six feet long, to which pieces of scarlet cloth were attached, tied so as to form a head something like an English child's dummy, this dressing-up being done when it is sanctified."

The Rev. George Cousins gives the following particulars as to the privileges enjoyed by the guardians of the national idol :—

"They had under their own control the life and death of their tribe, and could behead without consulting the government. They had the privilege of what is called *tsy màty manòta—i.e.* 'not dying when transgressing;' and if detected stealing, or worse, could claim release at once. They were treated, too, as nobles, and received the salutation which always distinguishes the noble, however poor, from the common Hova, however rich. They could carry a scarlet umbrella, which is the badge of honour, confined, with this one exception, to princes and princesses of the royal blood."

CHAPTER XIV.

EARLY MISSIONARY EFFORT, AND INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO THE COUNTRY.

First missionary efforts made by the Roman Catholic Church—Their character and evil influence—Portuguese and French missions—Conversions attempted by force—Disastrous results—Break-up of the mission—London Missionary Society—Arrival of Messrs. Bevan and Jones—Visitations of disease and death—Mr. Jones goes to the capital—Favourable reception by Radàma—Hindrances and encouragements—Translation—School education—Missionary artisans—Results of fourteen years' labour—Death of Radàma—Cruelty at accession of Rànavàlona—Liberty given at first—Jealousy of Christianity—Restrictions—Christians formally accused—Great kabàry to suppress Christianity—Departure of missionaries—Persecution—Its long continuance—Periods of special severity—First Christian martyr—Sufferings of Christians—The Prince Rakòto—His character—Great persecution of 1849—Hurling from rock—Burning alive—Heroic constancy and courage of the martyrs—Impression produced on the people—Visits of Rev. W. Ellis: their object and results—French plot to dethrone the queen—Its defeat, and punishment of conspirators—Many Christians stoned—Results of the persecution—Death of Rànavàlona—Accession of Radàma II.—Resumption of mission—Arrival of Mr. Ellis and other missionaries.

WE now turn from the shadowy notions of natural religion, and the superstitions connected with Malagasy idolatry, to the period when they began to be exchanged for the certainties, the bright hopes and realities, revealed by the Gospel of Christ. Madagascar, as we have seen, presents not a little to interest the naturalist, the ethnologist, the linguist, and the student of human nature in its widely-varying habits and customs; but, after all, its name is chiefly associated with a *Christian* heroism and fidelity which will always be remembered as marking a bright chapter in the modern history of the Church.

To the honour of the Roman Catholic faith, it must be recorded that it was owing to the efforts of its missionaries that Christianity (whatever may have been its form) was first made known in any way to the Malagasy. To the dishonour of the Romish Church, it must equally be remembered that these efforts were conducted in so unchristian a spirit, with so much intolerance and persecution, as not merely to do no permanent good, but to make the very name of Christian abhorrent to the people. This was strikingly shown when the first Protestant missionaries requested leave to teach at the capital. The king, Radàma I., acceded to their request, but only on the distinct understanding that no one should be *compelled* to become a convert, or to put himself under instruction. Physical force had been used instead of argument, and the "weapons of warfare" against heathenism were the muskets and bayonets of European troops instead of the "sword of the Spirit."

The Portuguese, who discovered the island in 1506, early introduced some Romish priests into the eastern provinces. They succeeded in inducing one of the chiefs to send his son to their Indian factory at Goa to be educated; but the lad, although he had been baptised, soon returned to his former heathenism upon succeeding to his father's authority. Their colony being soon afterwards destroyed by the French, nothing further was done for many years to teach the people Christianity.

About the middle of the following century, when the French held a number of settlements on the east coast, another Roman Catholic mission was established; and a bishop, with several priests and assistants, laboured there for several years. Their efforts appear to have met with small success, nor did they do much in reducing the

language to writing. The mission was, however, soon broken up by the conduct of Father Stephen, the superior. This man, without waiting patiently for the truths of the Gospel to produce their effect upon the intelligence and hearts of the people, endeavoured to convert one of the most intelligent and friendly chiefs by force; commanding him to put away his wives, and threatening him with the vengeance of the French if he refused. The chief asked for a few days' delay, during which he retreated with his followers to a secure position more inland. Father Stephen followed him, with a boldness worthy of a better cause, but with the folly of a fanatic; and again repeating his commands, he seized the household gods or charms of the chief, and dashed them to the ground before his eyes. The result was what might have been anticipated. Incensed by such an insult, orders were immediately given to kill the monk and his attendants, and he paid the penalty of his rashness with his life. A severe reprisal on the part of the French followed this murder, and a desolating war in the province, in which neither age nor sex were spared. Most active amongst the leaders of the forces was another monk; so that cruelty and persecution were early associated with the appearance of professedly Christian teachers. This disgraceful conduct was the means of breaking up the mission, and leaving a most unhappy impression upon the people as to the nature of Christianity and its adherents.

Towards the close of the last century, the London Missionary Society's attention was directed towards the island, and information gathered as to its climate and inhabitants. The celebrated Dr. Vanderkemp was requested to undertake a mission to Madagascar, but various obstacles arose, chiefly from the infrequent communication

with the country; and it was not until 1811 that he was able to arrange to proceed thither. His wishes were, however, not destined to be realised, for he died before leaving the Cape for Mauritius, in the December of that year.

Nothing further was done until 1818, when the Rev. Messrs. S. Bevan and D. Jones left England for Port Louis, where they arrived in July. Notwithstanding the unfavourable opinions expressed, both at Mauritius and Bourbon, with regard to their mission, they proceeded on their way, and landed at Tamatave on the 18th of August. It happened that, just about that time, Radàma was much exasperated against the English for their violation (by the deputy governor of Mauritius) of the treaty abolishing the slave-trade. Messrs. Bevan and Jones, therefore, decided to stay for a time at the coast, and test the capacity of the people for receiving instruction. They were kindly received by some of the neighbouring chiefs, and easily collected together a number of children, who soon acquired the knowledge of writing; while they themselves gained much information as to the language of the country, which they made some preliminary efforts to reduce to a written form.

After a residence of about six weeks at Tamatave, and having satisfied themselves that the Malagasy were not, as had been represented, a nation of utter barbarians, unteachable and untractable, the missionaries returned to Port Louis in order to fetch their wives and children. In ten days' time Mr. Jones returned with his family, leaving Mr. Bevan to follow in January; but before being rejoined by his companion, the little mission-party were all attacked by fever, and when Mr. Bevan landed Mrs. Jones and her infant daughter were dead, and Mr. Jones appeared to be

near his end. This mournful reception deeply affected the newly-arrived missionary; a presentiment of coming evil which he could not shake off weighed down his spirits, and he and his were soon seized by the same disease. On the 24th of January his child died; he sank under the attack of fever on the 31st, and on the 3rd of February Mrs. Bevan also passed away. Such was the mysteriously sad and discouraging commencement of the Madagascar mission. After a very severe illness, during which he was most unkindly treated by some of the European traders, Mr. Jones gradually recovered, as his friend had predicted, and in April he attempted to recommence his labours. Frequent relapses, however, rendered it desirable to try a change of air for a time, so he proceeded to Mauritius in the month of July.

After a stay of fourteen months, Mr. Jones left again for Madagascar, in company with Mr. James Hastie, who had just been appointed by the governor, Sir Robert Farquhar, to renew the treaty with Radàma for the abolition of the slave-trade. Sir Robert took the deepest interest in the mission, and did all in his power to secure for Mr. Jones a favourable reception at Antanànarìvo, where he arrived on the 4th of October, 1820. After the treaty had been, with some difficulty, re-established, the king gave the fullest permission for English Protestant missionaries to settle at the capital; and by his personal kindness to Mr. Jones showed his people how wishful he was that they would put themselves and their children under instruction. On the 8th of December operations were begun by opening the first school in Antanànarìvo.

In the following year, Mr. Jones was reïnforced by Mr. and Mrs. Griffiths, and in 1822 by additional labourers from England, including several missionary artisans, who

were sent by the society to teach the Malagasy some of the useful arts of civilisation. Amongst those sent were Christian men skilled in carpentry, weaving, tanning, and blacksmith-work, as well as printing. Mr. Johns and others arrived in 1826, and thus the mission was completely organised; and preachers, schoolmasters, printers, and artisans, were all actively engaged in their various labours for the benefit of the people. There were difficulties, of course, to contend with; but, on the other hand, their efforts for the material advancement of the Malagasy were heartily seconded by the king, who sent his own children for instruction, and willingly gave land for schools, workshops, residences, and places of worship.

The first work, of course, was to acquire the language. But little accurate information could be obtained at Mauritius on this subject, for the Malagasy tongue had never been reduced to regular form, or committed to writing; and its structure and grammar were yet to be ascertained from the Malagasy themselves. But this laborious task was in the course of time accomplished. The speech of the people was learned from their own lips, and then given back to them in a written form. Books of elementary instruction and vocabularies were prepared, and portions of the Scriptures translated.

School education held a prominent position in the labours of the first few years. The king was sensible of the value of knowledge as a means of national advancement, and the children were ordered to be sent for instruction. Nearly one hundred schools were established in the capital and its vicinity, and between four and five thousand of both sexes passed through them during a period of ten or twelve years, having received the elements of a good education. Such had been the dread of Europeans inspired

by the slave-trade, that it was long before many of the people would believe that their children were wanted in order to benefit them. Numbers thought that they were entrapped in order to be *eaten* by the English, as they fancied that this was the destination of those who were taken away and sent beyond the sea.

Prejudices such as these had to be overcome, as well as the natural dislike of the unrenewed heart to the purity and holiness required by the Gospel, and it was some years before any visible results in the way of conversion to Christianity were obtained. Yet there was much to encourage hope that a sensible impression was being made, and a groundwork laid down for future success. The idolatry of the people, as we have seen, had not that organised compact character which presents so formidable a barrier to Christianity in most heathen countries. There was no hereditary priestly caste to oppose its claims, and to argue against its authority. The goodwill of the sovereign and the more enlightened leading men of the country secured the missionaries from any external opposition; and there was a kindliness of feeling on the part of the people generally which showed them how their labours were appreciated as intended to do good.

The material advantages accompanying Christianity were an important element in this early mission-work. The London Missionary Society was accustomed at that period to send out Christian men to teach some of the more useful arts, as well as to give instruction in religious matters; and there can be no doubt that the presence of such men in Madagascar conciliated goodwill, when perhaps more lofty and spiritual aims would not for a long time have been appreciated. Besides this, there was a genuine feeling of respect for England, and a desire to become

friends with English people, who had already done much for the material advancement of the country. The knowledge of medicine possessed by some of the missionaries also gave a favourable impression of the beneficent character of Christianity, and often afforded opportunities for doing good to the souls as well as the bodies of the people.

It need hardly be said that, in addition to the literary, educational, and civilising labours of the missionary brethren, their constant endeavours were directed to the highest aspects of Christian work, and that they used every means to impress religious truth upon the people. Two congregations were gathered together in Antanànarìvo, and others in the villages around the capital, and also in Vònizòngo, a district about a day's journey to the west. The members of the little English society were formed into a church; public worship, Bible-classes, and other means of instruction were set on foot; and catechisms, scripture lessons, hymns, and portions of the New Testament were printed at the mission-press.

And thus, for several years, did they labour arduously for the benefit of the people, breaking up the fallow ground and sowing the good seed of the Word of God, doing their utmost to train up an educated and intelligent class, and actively engaged in translating the Holy Scriptures. On the 1st of January, 1828, the first sheet of St. Luke's Gospel was put to press, as an appropriate hallowing of the new year. In the autumn of the previous year a message had been sent from the king, allowing any to be baptised who wished to receive that rite; and although up to this time no Malagasy had made a public profession of Christianity, the missionaries had reason to believe that many were seeking after the true God, and that His truth was silently working in their hearts.

In July, 1828, an event took place which was destined to affect very seriously both the country and the prospects of the mission. King Radàma, after a stay of several months on the coast, where his constitution had been weakened by self-indulgence and excess, died. As we have seen, much of the liberty of action enjoyed by the missionaries had resulted from the personal influence of the king in their favour, although he had never professed himself a Christian. It was natural, therefore, that apprehension should be felt lest the change of sovereign should involve a change of policy, especially when the circumstances following Radàma's death were considered. The king had named as his successor his nephew, an amiable and intelligent lad, who had been instructed in the mission schools; but by the efforts of a party of officers who had viewed with dislike much of their sovereign's policy, one of his wives, Rànavàlona, was placed on the throne. The king's death was kept a profound secret for several days, until this faction had made sure of the army, and had secured the persons of several who were likely to oppose their designs.

From the first, a cold-blooded atrocity and cruelty marked Rànavàlona's reign. Several officers, who ventured to protest in the court of the palace against her accession, were immediately speared. The heir to the throne and all the near relatives of the late king were cruelly despatched, some by spearing, others by the slow agony of starving to death. With true Oriental indifference to suffering, the queen, like Athaliah, "rose and destroyed all the seed royal," so as to prevent any chance of a claimant to the crown afterwards rising up to dispute her possession of it. There also appeared at this time a disposition on the part of the government to outrage the feelings of Europeans,

and even to provoke hostilities; for Mr. Lyall, the British resident, who succeeded Mr. Hastie, was ordered to leave the country at a few hours' warning; and for some imaginary offence given to the idols, he and his family were subjected to gross insult and cruelty. It may well be imagined, therefore, that many fears were entertained lest restrictions should be placed upon Christian teaching, especially as the queen was known to be a devoted idolater, strongly attached to all the old superstitions, and that she was under the influence of a reactionary party who viewed with alarm and jealousy the progress of the faith of the Europeans.

For a considerable time, however, these apprehensions were not realised. Indeed, for the first year or two of Rànavàlona's reign, greater liberty was accorded to the people in religious matters. Although for a period of six months of national mourning after Radàma's death, no meetings, either for public worship or school instruction, were allowed to be held, yet when this time had elapsed, formal permission was given to the missionaries to resume their labours. During this season of enforced silence, every effort had been made to prepare books, and to complete the translation of the New Testament. On the 22nd of May, 1831, the proclamation about baptism was confirmed by a message from the queen, sent to the congregation assembled in one of the chapels.

During the years 1830 and 1831, the missionaries had been much encouraged by the evident influence that Christianity was gaining upon the people. The increasing and attentive congregations, the number of those who could read the Scriptures, and the knowledge that religious matters were much thought of and discussed, and that many were seeking to do good to their companions and bring them under instruction—all these facts warranted

them in urging several to make a public profession of their faith in Christ. Accordingly, on the Sunday following the receipt of the queen's message, twenty of the first converts were publicly baptised by Mr. Griffiths. Many others were soon afterwards received into fellowship; amongst these were some who had been active supporters of the national idolatry, and had been workers of the sikìdy, or divination, by which they had gained considerable influence and wealth. A spirit of earnest inquiry spread rapidly amongst the attendants upon Christian worship. Meetings in private houses for prayer and conversation were frequently held in addition to the more public services. A native church was formed, and people of all ranks, from the slaves to members of the royal family, were brought under the influence of the Gospel.

But this period of prosperity was not of long duration. It is not very clear what particular incident caused the first decisive change of policy on the part of the government, but probably the marked influence which Christianity was exerting alarmed them, as being a too rapid change in the customs of the country; while the personal attachment to idolatry shown by the queen and her advisers, made them jealous of any abandonment of the old superstitions. Permission to receive baptism had not been accorded more than six months before it was withdrawn in the case of those who were in government service, whether civil or military, and they were at the same time forbidden to become communicants. Under pretence of obedience to an old law of Radàma, the taking of wine at the communion service had been forbidden a month or two before this time. It was evident that a reactionary policy had commenced.

By the close of the year the prohibition of the rites of baptism and the Lord's Supper to government officials was

extended to all the people; officers who were known to be favourable to Christianity were put into inferior positions; and it was also attempted to divest the education given in the schools of any religious character. It was plain that the government only permitted instruction because of the need for well-qualified persons as clerks and secretaries to carry on public business. Liberty to preach and print still remained, and strenuous exertions were made to prepare a large number of books for circulation, and to instruct the increasing congregations who attended divine service. The missionaries felt how precarious was their position, how liable they were to be interrupted at any moment, and how necessary it was to spare no effort to make good use of whatever time might still be allowed to them to labour for the people. It was not difficult to guess what the future policy of the government would be. Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson, who had arrived in the country in 1831, specially to assist in the school-work, were only allowed to remain for a twelvemonth, and were obliged to leave in July of the following year.

Meanwhile, education was spreading with great rapidity; large editions of elementary books of instruction, and portions of the Scriptures, were printed and quickly sold; indeed, it was difficult to supply the wants of the people. During the years 1831–33, the attention of the government was in some measure diverted from the progress of Christianity, by the sending of several military expeditions against the Sàkalàvas, and also in preparing to oppose the designs of the French, who had attacked some of the ports, and were said to be preparing for an invasion of the east coast with a large force. Had it not been for this unsettled political state, and the wish to conciliate English opinion as some safeguard against the French, it is probable that more

active opposition would have been shown. The presence of Christian teachers was also tolerated on account of the advantages conferred upon the country by their knowledge of the useful arts.

The Christian soldiers who had formed part of the military forces sent to distant provinces, had done much to spread a knowledge of the Gospel both amongst their comrades and the people of the districts where they had gone; so that not only in Imérina, but in other parts of the island, many were learning to read, meeting together for worship, and trusting in Christ for salvation. Journeys of considerable extent were made by the missionaries, for the purpose of visiting these little Christian communities, as well as to preach to the surrounding heathen inhabitants.

In June 1834 the missionaries wrote as follows:—

"We have been exceedingly gratified with the personal conduct of many. There is a seriousness and steadiness, and perseverance and diligence, about them upon which we look with wonder and surprise, and are often prompted to exclaim, 'This is the finger of God!' We have reason to think that many are savingly converted to God, that many more are perfectly convinced of the folly of idolatry and divination, and that great numbers are awakened to think and inquire. The force of error is subdued, and the power of truth acknowledged. The preached Word is listened to attentively, and the Scriptures are earnestly sought and diligently examined."

They also referred to the spirit of prayer among the people, and the native agency that was being raised up for preaching and teaching. Those who had laboured for fourteen years were thus beginning to reap some of the fruits of their toil, and to rejoice that many had not heard in vain the story of Christ and His salvation.

Their rejoicing, however, was but brief. Before the close of the month, a message from the queen forbade any native, except those in the government service, to learn to read or write; and it was evident that still greater restrictions were about to be imposed.

In the early part of 1835, the storm which had been gathering so long burst upon the heads of the Christian teachers and their converts. Many persons of rank and distinguished position had become Christian; and this spreading of the new faith in high quarters provoked the determined opposition of the prime minister and his family, who had hitherto unwillingly tolerated its advance. It was clear that if Christianity was not arrested, the idolatry of the country would be speedily overturned, and all the customs of their ancestors forgotten. Many accounts were brought to the queen of the disrespect shown to the idols by Christians, of their contempt for charms, and their refusal to take part in idolatrous observances. At the close of the month of January, formal accusation was made before the chief judge against the Christians, in which the following charges were preferred:—

1st. They despise the idols; 2nd. They are always praying; 3rd. They will not swear, but merely affirm; 4th. Their women are chaste; 5th. They are of one mind with regard to their religion; and 6th. They observe the Sabbath as a sacred day.

It will be seen what an honourable testimony this accusation bore to the moral purity of life exemplified by the Christians. As in the case of Daniel, their enemies could allege nothing against them except it were concerning "the law of their God."

When this matter was brought before the queen she was deeply affected. Her anger was excited by the reports

which reached her as to the contempt into which idolatry was falling. One Sunday, a few days after the accusation was made, being carried in procession past one of the chapels during the time of service, and hearing the singing, she was heard to say of the worshippers, "They will not cease until some of them lose their heads." Christianity began to appear to the queen as not merely a sacrilege, but a political offence; her people were learning not only to despise the idols of their fathers, but were also ceasing to pray to the royal ancestors by whom the kingdom had been established, and under whom the country had become great and powerful. Might they not eventually despise her, and treat their living sovereign with contempt? With such a despotic woman as Rànavàlona, who suffered not the slightest resistance to her will, this was a powerful argument for interference. The crisis was brought about by the following incident. An influential chief—one of those who had viewed with dislike the growing influence of Christianity—appeared before the queen, and requested that a bright and sharp spear might be brought. On being asked for what purpose he made the demand, he replied that he could not but see with grief the dishonour done by the doctrines of the foreigners, both to the idols and the memory of the queen's predecessors, and how the ancient customs were being destroyed, and the new faith spreading on every hand; that this was but preparatory to the invasion of Madagascar by the Europeans; and as he would rather die than see his sovereign and country so disgraced, he asked for a spear to pierce his heart before that evil day came.

It is said that the queen was so affected with grief and rage that she remained silent for a considerable time, and then vowed that she would put a stop to Christianity if it

cost the life of every Christian in the island. For a fortnight subsequent to this, the palace and court appeared as if in mourning for some public calamity; no band played, no amusements were allowed, and an alarmed expectation of evil spread over all classes. During this time, measures were evidently being taken to effect the destruction, as far as possible, of all that had been done in the country by Christian teaching. On the 26th of July, the first communication on the subject was sent from the queen to the members of the mission. In this letter, while her majesty thanked them for their good intentions towards the country, and continued to give full permission to practise the observances of their religion, she informed them explicitly that she utterly detested any departure of her own subjects from the customs transmitted from her ancestors, Andrianimpòina and Radàma, and would on no account permit these customs to be altered. "And hence, then," she said, "with regard to the religious worship, whether on the Sunday or not, and the practice of baptism, and the existence of societies (*i.e.* churches), these things cannot be done by my subjects in my country; but with regard to yourselves, as Europeans, do that which accords with the customs of your ancestors and your own customs." She concluded by permitting them to teach any art or science which might be beneficial, but nothing of a religious character.

Deeply grieved, and yet hardly surprised, the missionaries replied, entreating the queen not to suppress their teaching of the Word of God; representing that for this very object they had left their native country, being persuaded that obedience to God's Word was the grand means of benefiting both individuals and nations. They were briefly informed, in answer to their protest, that no change could be allowed in the customs of the country.

On the 1st of March, an immense assembly, or kabàry, of the nation, met by proclamation at the capital, at Imàhamàsina. No rank or age was excepted, and it was estimated that between one and two hundred thousand people were gathered together. Nothing was omitted that could inspire awe and respect for the royal authority. The cannon along the heights of the city thundered out a salute early in the morning of the day; a body of troops, fifteen thousand strong, were marched to the place of assembly, to show the power of the queen to enforce her authority; and the highest civil and military officers appeared, bearing the sovereign's message. It was to the following effect:—

"I announce to you, O ye people, I am not a sovereign that deceives. I therefore announce to you what I purpose to do, and how I shall govern you. Who, then, is that man that would change the customs of our ancestors and the twelve sovereigns in this country? To whom has the kingdom been left by inheritance, by Impòin-Imérina and Radàma, except to me? If any, then, would change the customs of our ancestors and of the twelve sovereigns, I abhor that, saith Rabòdon-andrian-Impòin-Imérina.

"Now on the subject of reviling the idols, treating the divination as a trifle, and throwing down the tombs of the Vazìmba, I abhor that, saith Ranavàlo-manjàka. Do it not in my country. The idols (say you) are nothing. By them it is that the twelve kings have been established, and now are they changed, to become *nothing?* The divination also you treat in the same manner, and the tombs of the Vazìmba, indeed, are their evidence. Even the sovereign counts them sacred; and are the *people* to esteem them as *nothing?* This is my affair, saith Ranavàlo-manjàka, and I hold him *guilty*, whoever in my country destroys them (the tombs).

"As to baptism, societies, places of worship distinct from the schools, and the observances of the Sabbath, how many rulers are there in this land? Is it not I alone that rule? These things are not to be done; they are unlawful in my country, saith Ranavàlo-manjàka; for they are not the customs of our ancestors, and I do not change their customs, excepting as to things alone which improve my country."

Those who were guilty were then ordered to come in classes, according to the nature of their offences, and accuse themselves of having been baptised, of being members of the church, of having taught slaves to read. All were to come to the officers and confess; and death was denounced against any who concealed their offence and were accused by others. The message concluded as follows:—

"And then, in your worship, yours is not the custom of our ancestors. You change that, and you are saying, 'Believe,' 'Follow the customs' (*i.e.* Christian observances); and thus you change the customs of the ancestors; for you do not invoke all that is sacred in heaven and earth, and all that is sacred in the twelve sovereigns and the idols. And is not this changing the customs of the ancestors? I detest that, and I tell you plainly, that such things shall not be done in my country, saith Ranavàlo-manjàka."

It was evident that this proclamation was no vain threat, but that the queen was determined to enforce her will and make everything bend to it. An attempt was made to gain some modification of the strictness required; but it only resulted in the time for self-accusation being shortened from a month to a week, and in a further order that all books were to be given up to the queen's officers. It may easily be imagined how great was the grief and conster

nation of the Christian part of the community. It was dangerous for them to be seen, either at the houses or in the company of the English missionaries; and the latter were warned against the slightest infringement of the law. Great numbers of copies of the New Testament and other portions of the Bible were given up, in many cases with tears and bitter regret; while many concealed them in their houses, buried in the earth, or hidden in secure places. At great risk, some few visited their teachers by night, to be refreshed and strengthened by reading the Scriptures, and dwelling upon the promises and support of God's Word.

After another ineffectual attempt to gain some permission to teach and preach, the majority of the mission-party, seeing that their work was at an end, quitted the capital for Mauritius and the Cape, in the months of June and August, leaving Messrs. Johns and Baker to remain yet for awhile, to encourage by their presence, if not by their words, the little band of faithful men and women. No longer able to give instruction, their chapels closed, their classes dispersed, deprived of their servants and native printers, the most strenuous efforts had been made to complete an edition of the entire Bible in Malagasy. The missionaries determined that if they were obliged, as seemed inevitable, to forsake their converts, they would at least leave with them, as their most precious legacy, the whole Word of God in the native language. Working themselves as compositors and pressmen, they were enabled to complete this work before quitting the country. Mr. Johns was also engaged in a translation of the "Pilgrim's Progress," a book which was afterwards highly prized by the people, and was held in estimation next to the Bible itself.

Hitherto, no active measures of persecution had been

commenced by the government; but in the early part of 1836, Rafàravàvy, a woman of high rank, afterwards well known to many in England, was accused of the crime of Christianity. She was condemned to death, but the superstitious fears of the queen being aroused by a fire which occurred in the capital, her life was spared; but she was fined heavily, as a warning to her not to trifle with the commands of her sovereign.

Messrs. Johns and Baker were soon afterwards requested by the government to leave the country; and finding it impossible to do anything further without involving their friends in danger, with sad hearts they set out for the coast in the month of July, leaving their people, not merely as sheep without shepherds, but exposed to the cruelty of those who were thirsting for their destruction. It may be recorded that the last sermon preached in the old chapel at Ambàtonakànga was from the text, "Lord, save us, we perish!"—appropriate words, indeed, for the little flock of believers to use, exposed, as they were about shortly to be, to the full storm of persecution. But the Lord *was* with them in their distress, and saved many from the malice of their enemies, while to others He gave such strength and joy that cruel deaths were converted into scenes of triumph.

It does not come within our scope to attempt any minute account of the long period of persecution which now hung like a dark cloud over the country. Details are to be found in the books published by Messrs. Freeman and Johns, Mr. Ellis, and Bishop Ryan—facts of the most touching character, testifying to the faith and courage and endurance of those who believed in Christ, and were again and again called to confess His name, and to give up their lives for His sake. Church history presents no more instructive picture of the power of the simple Gospel than is furnished

by the record of those long weary years. We can only attempt to indicate the more prominent features of this time.

The persecution lasted twenty-five years, reckoning from the departure of the last English missionaries to the death of the queen. And during all this time no one could (except at the risk of losing property and liberty and life), meet for worship, pray to the true God, invoke Christ's name, or read the Scriptures or any Christian book. Yet religious ordinances were to some extent observed in secret; in secluded villages, in recesses of the forest, in caves, even in rice-holes, worship was occasionally offered; the emblems of Christ's death were partaken of, and those who joined their community were received by baptism on profession of their faith. Leaves and small portions of the Scriptures were carefully treasured up as the most precious possession; something of a very simple yet scriptural system of Church order and discipline was maintained; and those of their number who were apt to teach and exhort were gradually recognised as pastors and elders amongst them. It is a remarkable testimony to the power and purity of the life and belief of the persecuted Church, that during this long period no serious error either in doctrine or practice sprang up in their midst. The constant study of the Word of God, almost their only book, and the gracious influence of the Spirit of God, were sufficient to preserve them from mistake in either direction.

Active persecution, of course, was not maintained with equal violence throughout the whole twenty-five years. Occasionally, the hatred of the queen and her advisers against Christianity seemed to give place to a more merciful policy, and the fears of foreign invasion also frequently diverted the attention of the government. Three

or four periods stand out prominently from the rest of the quarter-century as times of more than ordinary cruelty and determined measures to crush out the hated faith and its adherents. These times were the years 1837–38, 1840, 1849, and 1857.

The first martyr for Christ was a young woman named Rasalàma. In the year 1837, she was put to death by spearing at Ambòhipòtsy, the southern extremity of the long rocky hill on which the capital is built. She had previously been subjected to cruel torture, by being put into irons, made not so much for security as to inflict severe punishment. "These irons consisted of rings and bars, and were so fastened around the feet, hands, knees, and neck as to confine the whole body in the most excruciating position, forcing the extremities together as if packed in a small case. Being led the next morning to the place of execution, she expressed her joy that she had received the knowledge of the truth, and continued singing hymns on the way. Passing by the chapel where Mr. Griffiths preached, and where she had been baptised, she exclaimed, 'There I heard the words of the Saviour.' On reaching the fatal spot she calmly knelt down, and in solemn prayer committed her spirit into the hands of her Redeemer, and in that attitude was speared to death; the executioners, standing behind her and by her side, struck her through the ribs and heart. Her body was left to be devoured by the wild dogs that frequent all places in Madagascar where criminals suffer.

"In the year following, Rafàralàhy, a noble-minded and devoted Christian, shared a similar fate. He was executed on the same spot, and exhibited in his last moments the same holy confidence and joy. The storm of persecution increased in violence, and among those apprehended were

the six Christian natives (four men and two women) who escaped death by flight, and happily reached this country in the year 1839, where they gave ample and conclusive evidence of their Christian principles. One of these was Mary, or Rafàravàvy, previously mentioned, a woman who had belonged to a superior class of society in Madagascar, and whose life was saved as by a miracle."

Many others, in later years, suffered at Ambòhipòtsy, and on this account it was chosen as one of the places where memorial churches should be built. Not many yards from the spot where the heroic Rasalàma knelt to receive the executioner's spear, a large church now stands, and its spire forms one of the most prominent objects in every distant view of the city.

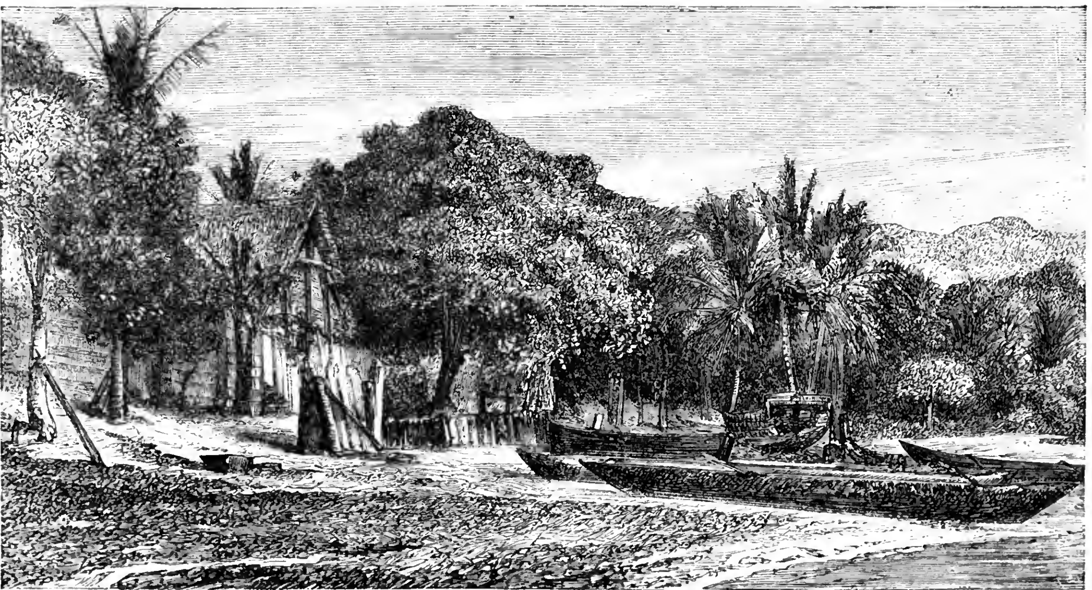
The remarkable circumstances through which many were preserved from the rage of their enemies, furnish ample illustrations of the doctrine of a special providence; and the letters occasionally sent to their friends at Mauritius contained most exciting accounts of hairbreadth escapes and deliverances. Many were condemned to lose their honours and rank, others were fined heavily, others were sold into perpetual slavery, and some were sent to distant unhealthy parts of the country, to die by the slow poison of the marsh-fever.

In 1840, Mr. Johns ventured, at some risk, to go up to the capital, after assisting in the escape of the six Christian natives. He found, to his grief, that several whom he knew and loved had been condemned to death, and only a few days after his arrival, nine were speared at Ambòhipòtsy. It was said that not fewer than two hundred Christians were scattered over the country, hiding from their enemies, "being destitute, afflicted, tormented." Efforts were made to assist them to escape to the coast, but so strict a watch

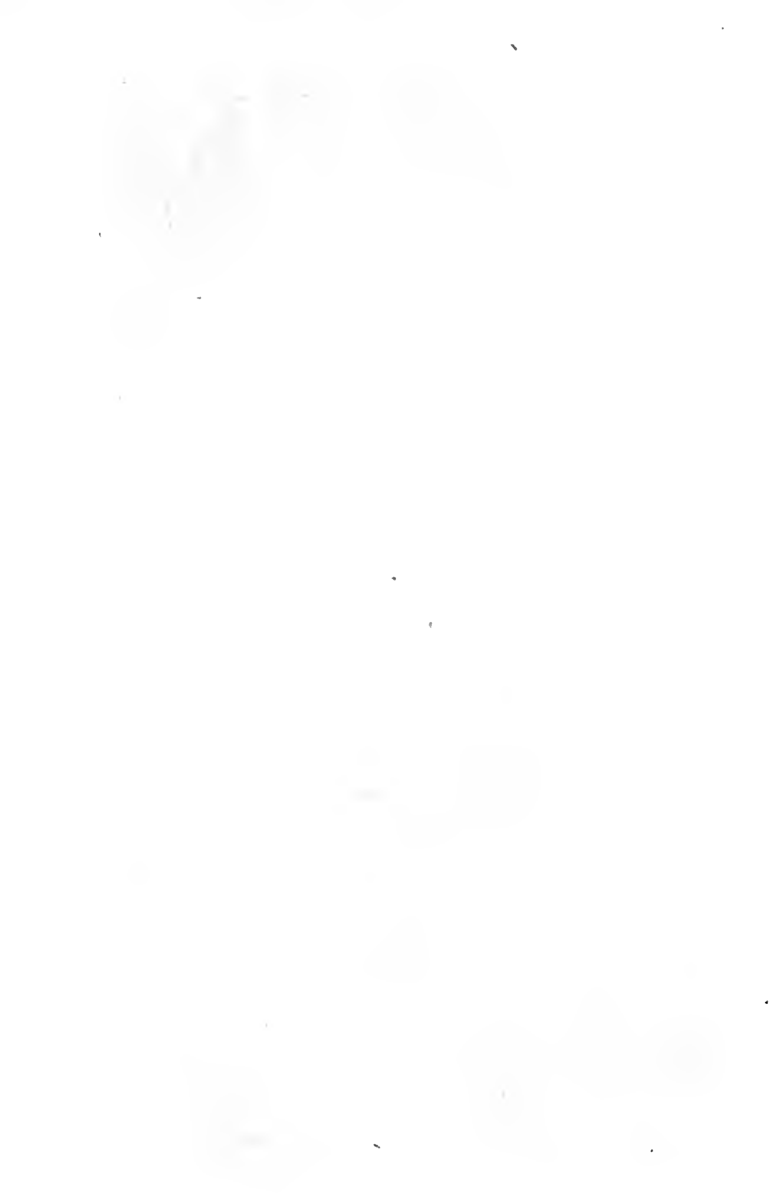
was kept, that it was almost impossible to aid anyone. Many suffered death in 1842, some of them by the tangèna ordeal. Most touching were the letters that at rare intervals found their way to Port Louis, telling of the heavy sorrows that the Christians in hiding were enduring; yet so full of trust and confidence in God, and in unabated steadfastness in enduring all He might see fit to call them to suffer, and breathing nothing but forgiveness and pity for their persecutors.

In 1843, Mr. Johns, who had been their tried and faithful friend for many years, fell a victim to fever at the island of Nòsi-bé, on the north-west coast of Madagascar. He had gone there hoping to aid some to escape, but died amongst strangers, within sight of the land whose people he loved so well.

About this time, there appears to have been a lull in the storm, for meetings for worship were almost openly held near the capital. A remarkable boldness and fervour were shown by some of the preachers, and numbers of the heathen were added to the company of proscribed Christians. Perhaps this was in some measure caused by the interest shown in Christianity by the queen's only son, the Prince Rakòtond'Radàma, who attended the services and is said to have been baptised. The prince was a most remarkable young man. Brought up in a state of society where human life was esteemed as of little value, where cruelty was constantly seen, the son of a mother who regarded nothing that interfered with her absolute will, he was, on the contrary, mild and humane, hating cruelty, with an innate passion for doing what was fair and just, and refusing to inflict punishment even when his own safety seemed to demand it. He dared to oppose his mother's will, and to stand forth as the protector of the oppressed,



NÒSI-BE, THE BURIALPLACE OF THE REV. D. JOHNS.



whoever they might be; but the Christians seem to have especially gained his sympathy, from the manifest injustice of which they were so frequently the victims. To what extent his heart was really influenced by the Gospel, it seems impossible now to understand; the dark vices which gained such power over him in later life, when king, have to a great extent obscured the undeniable excellences of his character; yet it is certain that for many years he largely mitigated the severity of the queen by his influence over her, and his prompt and ingenious endeavours to help those who were suffering and down-trodden. It was not unnatural that the Christians should have represented him as really one of themselves, for he seemed so much influenced by the humane and beneficent spirit of the Gospel. The one redeeming point in Rànavàlona was her affection for her son. When urged to restrain him, as he supported those who defied her authority, she only replied, "He is my son—he is my beloved son!"

Another member of the royal family, Prince Ramònja, was also an active friend of the Christians; and others in high positions joined them, including the son of the prime minister Rainihàro, who was the chief agent in inciting the queen to persecute.

By very gracious indications of His presence in comforting and strengthening the hearts of the believers, and making large additions to their numbers from the heathen, God was evidently preparing them for the terrible trials which awaited them in 1849, a year known as that of the Great Persecution. This fresh outbreak of cruelty was provoked partly by the increasing numbers and boldness of the Christians, and the progress made by their opinions amongst men of high rank. Rambòasalàma, Rakòto's cousin and rival claimant to the throne, was one of the

chief movers in this renewed attempt to destroy Christianity out of the land.

The 28th of March, 1849, will long be remembered as a terrible and yet a glorious day in the religious history of Madagascar. Nineteen Christians were condemned to death, and in the presence of a great multitude witnessed a good confession with heroic fortitude and even with joy. Of this number, fourteen suffered at Ampàmarìnana, a place which has been compared to the Tarpeian Rock of Rome, but which on that day beheld a scene that has no parallel in classic story. This name is borne by a precipice which forms part of the bold cliffs by which the western side of the city of Antanànarìvo descends to the plain. The narrow platform of rock at its summit is not more than 150 yards distant from the great palace, although considerably lower in level, so that a stone could almost be thrown upon the spot from the balconies. The face of the cliff is broken by a projecting ledge about halfway down, but the total fall of those who were hurled from the top was about 150 feet. This punishment was reserved for sorcerers, or rather those declared to be guilty of such offences by the poison-ordeal. It will be remembered that the Christians were supposed to be able to resist the queen's commands through the influence of some powerful spell or charm.

"The fifteen, wrapped in mats, and with mats thrust into their mouths to prevent their speaking to each other or to the people, were then hung by their hands and feet to poles, and carried to the place of execution. But the attempt wholly to stop their mouths failed, for they prayed and addressed the crowd as they were borne along. Thus they reached Ampàmarìnana. A rope was then firmly tied round the body of each, and, one by one, fourteen of

them were lowered a little way over the precipice. While in this position, and when it was hoped by their persecutors that their courage would fail, the executioner, holding a knife in his hand, stood waiting for the command of the officer to cut the rope. Then for the last time the question was addressed to them, 'Will you cease to pray?' But the only answer returned was an emphatic 'No.' Upon this the signal was given, the rope was cut, and in another moment their mangled and bleeding bodies lay upon the rocks below. One of those brave sufferers for Christ, whose name was Ramànambònina, as he was led to the edge of the precipice, begged his executioners to give him a short time to pray, 'for on that account,' he said, 'I am to be killed.' His request being granted, he kneeled down and prayed aloud very earnestly; and having risen from his knees, he addressed the people with such powerful and subduing eloquence that all were amazed, and many struck with awe."*

One only of the condemned was spared. "A young woman, who was very much liked by the queen, was placed where she could see her companions fall, and was asked, at the instance of the queen—who wished to save her, but could not exempt her from the common sentence against the Christians—whether she would not worship the gods and save her life. She refused, manifesting so much determination to go with her brethren and sisters to heaven, that the officer standing by struck her on the head, and said, 'You are a fool!—you are mad!' They sent to the queen and told her that she had lost her reason, and should be sent to some place of safe keeping."

A more terrible fate was reserved for the remaining four. They belonged to the class of Andrians, or nobles; and as,

* "Madagascar, its Mission and its Martyrs."

by the traditional usages of the country, it was deemed unlawful to shed the blood of persons of this rank, by a refinement of cruelty they were condemned to be burned alive. This sentence was carried into effect at Fàravòhitra, a place at the summit of the northern ridge of the city hill, just where it begins to slope down to the plain. Their companions had been ignominiously bound to poles and carried to the place of execution; but they were allowed to walk to their death. With wonderful composure and confidence, these four Christians, one of whom was a woman, mounted the hill, singing some of those hymns which had been their joy in former times and were their solace now. There was no wavering, no shrinking back from the fiery ordeal. As they went along they sang together a hymn, beginning—

"When our hearts are troubled,"

and each verse of which ends with—

"Then, remember us."

They reached the place, calmly gazed upon the preparations for their death, and meekly surrendered themselves to be fastened to the stakes. "At the moment when they were brought to the stakes," writes an eyewitness, "a remarkable phenomenon occurred. An immense rainbow, forming a triple arch, stretched across the heavens. One end appeared to rest on the posts to which the martyrs were tied. The rain in the meantime fell in torrents, and the multitude who were present on the occasion, were so struck with amazement and terror at the occurrence, that many of them took to flight." The pile was kindled, and then from amidst the crackling and roaring of the fire were heard, not the sounds of pain, but the song of praise.

That scene, and the hymn which these martyrs sang as they rose in their fiery chariot to heaven, will never be forgotten in Madagascar. But prayer followed praise. "O Lord," they were heard to cry, "receive our spirits; for Thy love to us has caused this to come to us; and lay not this sin to their charge!" "Thus," wrote a witness of that wonderful and memorable scene, "they prayed, as long as they had any life; then they died—but softly, gently. Indeed, gently was the going-forth of their life, and astonished were all the people around that beheld the burning of them there!"*

It may be added that in the case of the Christian lady, the pangs of maternity were added to the terrors of the fiery stake. In the midst of the flames a child was born, which met the same fate as the mother who gave it birth in such fearful circumstances. The mangled corpses of those who had been dashed to pieces at Ampàmarìnana were presently brought to Fàravòhitra, and burned together with the living bodies of their friends; and so the dreadful tragedy was completed.

Thus another company was added to "the noble army of martyrs," and yet another proof afforded of the power of the love of Christ to make men and women faithful unto death.

The scenes of this day produced a deep impression upon the minds of the people. The cruelty of the queen and her government was beginning to defeat its own purpose. The heathen saw that there was a power in the religion professed by the Christians, which overcame all earthly opposition; many felt and said, "This is the finger of God—there must be something divine in this belief." Numbers were impelled to inquire into the secret of this wonderful

* "Madagascar, its Mission and its Martyrs."

courage, and were eventually led to join their community, notwithstanding the peril to which it exposed them.

It must not be forgotten that, in addition to those who endured this extreme penalty for their faith, a far larger number suffered in other ways. "Thirty-seven preachers, with their wives and families, were consigned to a life of slavery. More than a hundred were flogged with the whip, and sentenced to work in chains during their lives. Some who were made slaves might purchase back their liberty, and the liberty of their wives and children, if money enough could be found, but the slavery of others was irredeemable. Many were heavily fined, and those who had been among the great and noble of the land were stripped of their honours and titles, and not only reduced in rank, but forced to the hardest and most menial labour. Altogether, in the early spring of 1849—that fearful year—1900, according to the lowest estimate, but more probably upwards of 2000, were punished, because they had either professed or favoured the religion of Jesus."* Many officers in the army were reduced to the ranks, and condemned to severe labour in building a large stone house as a government factory. They were branded with the words "*Tsi-hiahàrana*," *i. e.* "That which is not to be imitated," as a warning to others not to disobey the queen's commands.

It is remarkable that the Prince Rakòto was allowed to go unpunished or unrestrained, for his cousin Ramònja was deprived of his military honours, reduced to the ranks, and heavily fined. Yet the prince was untouched, and did much in secret to help his persecuted friends.

The impression of those terrible scenes at Ampàmarìnana and Fàravòhitra, twenty years ago, is still fresh in the

* "Madagascar, its Missions and its Martyrs."

recollection of the people. Many of the relatives of those who there suffered are still living, and occasionally refer with deep feeling and tenderness to their loved ones who then laid down their lives for Christ's sake.

Yet another lull in the storm before its final outbreak. After 1849, the proscribed Christians enjoyed comparative security and rest for a considerable period, owing probably, in a great measure, to the influence of the prince and his cousin, and not a little also in consequence of the death of Rainihàro, the queen's prime minister and favourite. Rumours reached Mauritius that Rànavàlona was about to abdicate in favour of her son, and that a considerable relaxation of the penal laws against Christianity had taken place. At length, in 1853, these reports took so definite and apparently trustworthy a form, that the directors of the London Missionary Society determined to send a mission of inquiry to the island, to ascertain, by personal observation, the correctness of the information they had received. They therefore requested the Rev. William Ellis to undertake this responsible and difficult task.

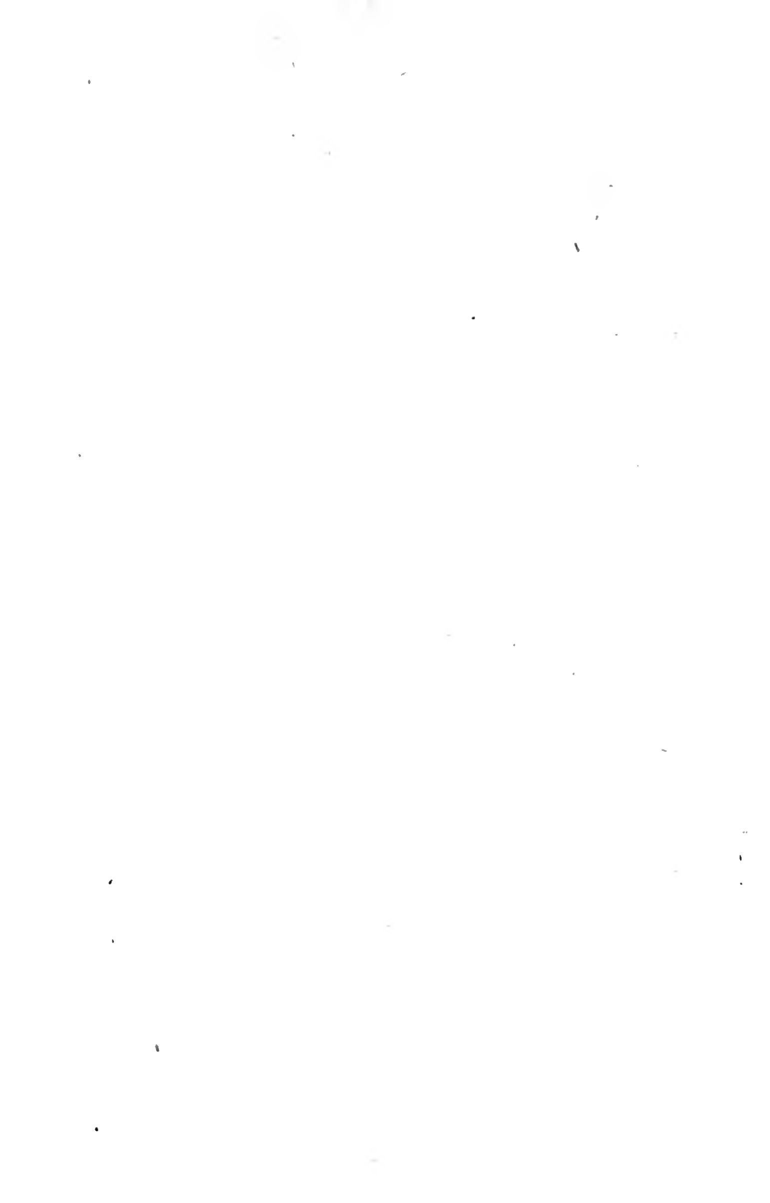
Mr. Ellis's missionary life had begun in 1816. Accompanying the honoured John Williams, he went out to the South Seas, where he laboured for several years, and had subsequently, for a longer period, occupied the post of foreign secretary to the society. While acting in this capacity he had necessarily much communication with the mission in Madagascar; and in 1838 he published the most complete and valuable work yet written upon that country—viz., "The History of Madagascar," in two volumes. The materials for a large portion of this work were supplied by the missionaries at Antanànarìvo. Use was also made of all that had been written by French historians on this subject; and the book was carefully revised by the

Rev. J. J. Freeman upon his return to England. Thus, although up to this date (1853) Mr. Ellis had never visited Madagascar, he was familiar with its history and circumstances, and he gladly accepted the commission with which he was entrusted by the directors.

On arriving at Mauritius, Mr. Ellis found that there had been much exaggeration in the reports which had reached England. He landed at Tamatave in July 1853, but was unable to gain permission to proceed to the capital, and after staying about three weeks returned to Port Louis. A few months later, Mr. Ellis made a second attempt to reach Antanànarìvo; but as the cholera had been raging at Mauritius, very stringent quarantine regulations were in force at Tamatave, and he was obliged very reluctantly to abandon his design, after visiting Foule Pointe, and remaining for three months on the eastern coast. He returned to England in the summer of 1855, after a tour through the South African mission stations.

During Mr. Ellis's stay at Cape Colony, he had received letters from the Malagasy government, granting him permission to visit Antanànarìvo. He accordingly left England again in March 1856, and reached the capital of Madagascar in the month of August. Although no active measures of persecution were then in progress, the practice of the Christian religion was still strictly forbidden, and great caution and wisdom were needed in communication with the native converts, for Mr. Ellis felt that all his movements were carefully watched. Still, he was enabled to assure them of the deep interest felt in their welfare by those in England who had first sent them the Gospel. He was able to distribute relief to many who were suffering deep poverty and privation, and also to give what they far more prized—copies of the New Testament and of the Psalms and other

THE LATE QUEEN'S SPIES.



Christian books. The queen and her officers showed every mark of courtesy and attention to their visitor, but it was evidently impossible for him to ask for any relaxation of the laws against Christianity; and after staying at the capital for a month only, Mr. Ellis was advised to leave, the approach of the rainy season being put forward as a reason why he should not prolong his stay. Such advice was equivalent to a command. Unable to do more to forward the object he had so much at heart, Mr. Ellis left Antanànarivo and returned to England, where he arrived in the early part of 1857.

Although these visits did not accomplish all that had been hoped for, they were not without important results. The very presence of an English missionary in the country was an assurance to the Christians that they were not forgotten by their friends in England, and was a comfort to them in their affliction. Much valuable information was collected, showing the wonderful advances Christianity was making, despite all opposition; fresh interest was awakened amongst British churches, and renewed prayer presented that the time to visit Madagascar with safety would soon come.

Mr. Ellis had not returned to England much more than three months before the last and one of the most fearful persecutions broke out. This was in a great measure immediately provoked by political circumstances, and by the intrigues of foreigners then living in the country. For several years there had been several Frenchmen resident at the capital, one of whom especially, M. Laborde, had been in high favour with the queen, and had done much for the material advancement of the people by instructing them in various arts; erecting factories for the manufacture of soap, cotton goods, coarse paper, glass, and pottery—as

well as founding cannon, and making muskets and other arms. Another French gentleman, M. Lambert, a planter from Mauritius, had also been frequently at Antanànarìvo, and had gained great influence over the prince. Disgusted with the cruelty of the queen, and the increasing barbarism to which her measures were reducing the country, these gentlemen formed a scheme to depose Rànavàlona and to put the prince on the throne. But charity does not forbid us to affirm that the hope of making French influence supreme in the island was the chief motive at work, and (in the case of M. Lambert at least) an expectation of gaining large personal advantages from the favour of Rakòto, when he should become king. Subsequent events prove the justice of these assertions.

The plot, however, was discovered. Very naturally incensed at the intended outrage upon her liberty and authority, the queen took summary measures. Messrs. Laborde and Lambert, together with Madame Ida Pfeiffer, who happened to be then visiting the capital, and two Jesuit priests, who were disguised as a physician and a schoolmaster, were banished from the country. Rànavàlona dared not risk a collision with European Powers by openly putting them to death, but she gave orders to keep them several weeks on the road to the coast, exposed to the risk of dying by the fever. In this she was disappointed, for all the party lived to leave Madagascar, although not without impaired health from the hardships to which they had been subjected.

And now the queen turned to wreak her vengeance upon the Christians, whom she suspected of having wished well to this attempt to dethrone her. Probably some of them had known of the scheme, and hoped for its success, longing for any deliverance from her oppression, although it was

never proved that they took any active part in the plot. But it was sufficient for the queen that her laws against Christianity were still in force, and that it was well known that the numbers of its adherents were increasing every day. She determined upon yet another attempt to stamp it out, and terrify her people into submission.

The 3rd of July, 1857, was a day similar in terror to many which the Malagasy Christians had already experienced. The population of the capital was driven from their houses by the soldiers to a great national assembly. "There was," said an eyewitness, "a general howling and wailing, a rushing and running through the streets, as if the town had been attacked by a hostile army." Swift punishment followed; all suspected persons were imprisoned, and in the city and its neighbourhood almost daily kabàrys were held to denounce the Christians, and declare the queen's will not to rest until she had rooted them out of the land. A few days after the great assembly, twenty-one were stoned and then beheaded; many others suffered at "The Rock of Hurling," and it was believed that this was the most fatal of all the persecutions yet endured. A large number were sentenced to the tangèna ordeal, by which many died, and many more were put in chains and reduced to slavery.

But deliverance was now at hand. The dark night was beginning to brighten with approaching dawn. The queen was declining in health, and in the early part of 1861 it was evident that she would not long retain the sceptre. God had heard the sighing of the prisoners. He was about to deliver those appointed unto death. Twenty-five years of persecution, so far from rooting out the hated doctrines of the Gospel, had only spread their influence far and wide. As in apostolic days, "those who were persecuted went

everywhere preaching the Word." A depth and power and reality had been given to Christian life, which a time of ease and prosperity could never have effected. The Gospel had proved to be indeed "the power of God"—overcoming all that an absolute sovereign, backed by a powerful government and numerous army, could do to dislodge it from the country. More than a hundred had suffered death by public execution during the queen's reign, while a far larger number perished by the tangèna or died in prison, in heavy slavery, or of hunger and thirst and disease, in the forests and deserts to which they fled. Yet, notwithstanding all this, that little company of believing men and women, left in 1836 by their English teachers, had multiplied at least twentyfold in 1861, and had attained to a fulness of faith and love which spoke far more powerfully to their heathen fellow-countrymen than any mere words could do. Their patient trust in God, their forgiving spirit, had often melted the hearts of their persecutors. Their purity of life and morals was testified to by their enemies: their religion was their only crime. The martyrs' blood had proved the seed of the Malagasy Church.

On the 15th of August, 1861, Queen Rànavàlona passed away to the tribunal of the King of kings. The Prince Rakòto, under the title of Radàma II., succeeded, amidst the general rejoicing of the people, who were wearied by thirty-three years of oppression. For although the Christian part of the population had felt the queen's cruelty most severely, her heathen subjects also had good reason to hail the accession of a more merciful sovereign. Radàma was known to be just and humane, to be desirous of friendship with Europeans, and of doing everything that could advance his country's welfare. There can be no doubt that at the beginning of his reign he did cherish a very sincere wish to

make Madagascar an enlightened kingdom, and had a noble ambition to be himself its leader and regenerator.

His succession to the throne was not accomplished without some difficulty. His rival, Rambòasalàma, had the support of many of the heathen party, but the commander-in-chief was Radàma's warm friend and adherent. By his skilful management the troops were concentrated in and around the capital as the queen's decease approached; Rambòasalàma and his followers were disarmed, and he owed his life and property to the magnanimous conduct of the new king, who would not sully the commencement of his reign by the destruction of even so dangerous a rival. He was merely put under restraint and sent away into the country at some distance from the capital, after taking the oath of allegiance.

And now came deliverance to the captives—the opening of the prison-doors to them that were bound. Religious freedom came together with political liberty. Mr. Ellis's words will best describe the immediate effects of Radàma's accession. "The sun," he says, "did not set on the day on which Radàma II. became king of Madagascar, before he had proclaimed equal protection to all its inhabitants, and declared that every man was free to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, without fear or danger. He sent his officers to open the prison-doors, to knock off the fetters from those to whom the joyous shouts of the multitude without had already announced that the day of their deliverance had come. He despatched others to call the remnant of the condemned ones from the remote and pestilential districts to which they had been banished, and where numbers had died from disease or exhaustion, from the rude and heavy bars of iron with which they had been chained from neck to neck together. The exiles hastened

home: men and women, worn and wasted with suffering and want, reappeared in the city, to the astonishment of their neighbours—who had deemed them long since dead—but to the grateful joy of their friends. The long-desired jubilee had come, and gladness and rejoicing everywhere prevailed; for many who were not believers in the Gospel sympathised with the Christians in their sufferings, and rejoiced in their deliverance."

Speaking of themselves, some of the exiles said: "We were like those spoken of in the Psalms, 'Our mouth was filled with laughter, our tongue with singing. Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them.' And we replied, 'The Lord *hath* done great things for us, whereof we are glad.'"

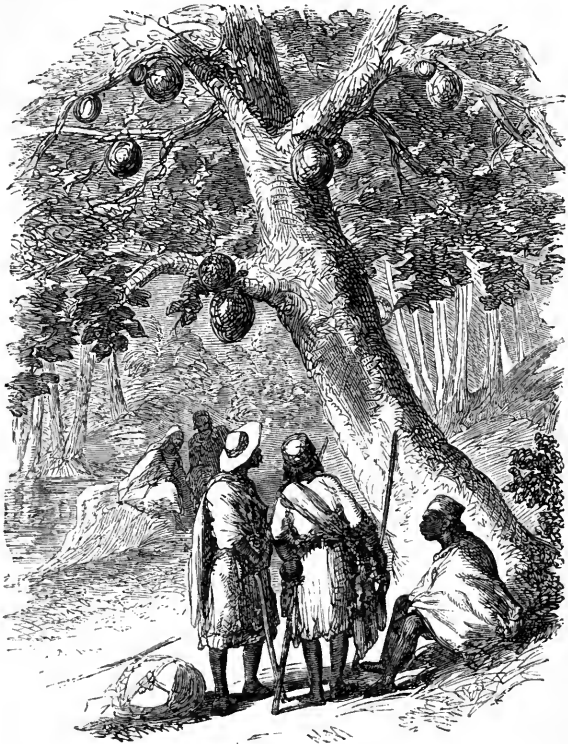
It was soon known that there was perfect liberty of worship, and not more than a month elapsed after the death of the queen, before divine service was re-established at the capital; and in no less than eleven houses the Christians met together, every place being crowded to excess. In a short time, five places of worship were erected: these were rude structures, with mud walls and thatched roofs—long, low, and dark, but which were filled, Sabbath after Sabbath, from morning to night, with large congregations, rejoicing with deep emotion that the darkness had passed, and the true light was shining again upon the land.

The London Missionary Society lost no time in preparing to reoccupy the field, and accepting the invitation of the king and the Christians to renew their labours. Not many days after receiving intelligence of the death of Rànavàlona, Mr. Ellis was again on his way to Madagascar as the representative of the society, to prepare for the re-establishment of the missionaries at Antanànarivo, and to make the needful arrangements for regaining the sites of churches,

dwellings, and schools, which had to be abandoned at the outbreak of persecution in 1836. Obliged to wait a few months at Mauritius for the healthy season, Mr. Ellis was yet able to hold frequent communication by letter with the Malagasy Christians, and to assure them of the speedy coming of European missionaries to take the oversight of their congregations. The Rev. J. J. Le Brun, of Port Louis, had already (in the closing months of 1861) made a visit to the capital; and his presence and counsel were of great value to the native churches, while he was able by personal observation to send accurate statements as to the reality of the change brought about, and the requirements of the rapidly increasing Christian community.

Mr. Ellis reached Antanànarìvo in the month of June 1862, and received a warm welcome from the people, and many marks of respect from the king and his government. He was followed towards the end of August by three ordained ministers, a medical missionary, a schoolmaster, and a printer, who were all speedily at work in their various departments of labour. And thus, after an interval of more than twenty-six years, the work relinquished in 1836 was resumed. Christianity had triumphed. The attempts made to crush it out of existence had only strengthened and extended it. Its adherents were found in all parts of the island. The small and feeble sect had become a large and influential portion of the community. Their numbers surprised themselves not less than their heathen fellow-countrymen Well might the newly-arrived missionaries, as they attended the first services, and joined for the first time with the native churches in the Lord's Supper, feel almost overwhelmed as they gazed upon the crowded congregations! Remembering that forty years before there was not a single believer in Christ in Madagascar

—remembering the fiery trial through which that Malagasy Church had passed, and contrasting that time of trouble with the rest and peace they now enjoyed, they could not refrain from exclaiming, again and again, "What hath God wrought!"—"This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes!"



BREADFRUIT TREE.

CHAPTER XV.

RECENT CHRISTIAN WORK AND PROGRESS—LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY'S LABOURS AT ANTANÀNARÌVO.

Bright prospects of Radàma's reign—His death: its causes and results—Conflicting elements in his character—The dancing mania—Civil and religious liberty secured under Ràsohèrina—Her just and tolerant conduct—Steady progress of Christianity during her reign—Labours of the missionaries—Prominent features of Christian life—Spirit of hearing and desire for knowledge—Thankfulness—Self-help—Chapel-building—Missionary spirit—Character of Malagasy Christianity—Its influence on the heathen—Improvement in public morals—Medical mission—Death of Ràsohèrina—Her superstition—Great advance at accession of Ramòma—Public renunciation of idolatry—Crowded congregations—Widening influence of Christianity—Opening of Ambòhipòtsy Memorial Church—Presence of court—Baptism of queen and prime minister—Dangers of a time of such prosperity—Encouragements—Removal of all restrictions on Christian effort.

THE seven years from the re-establishment of the English Protestant mission in 1862 to the time of writing (July, 1869) may be roughly divided into three periods, of one year, five years, and one year each, corresponding to the reigns of the three sovereigns who have held the royal dignity during that time. The history of Christianity in Madagascar during this period is, on the whole, a record of steady advance and increasing influence, varied only by unimportant and temporary hindrances; and closing, by the latest accounts, with prospects of speedy extension over all the central provinces of the island. From the statements already made, it will readily be perceived to how great an extent the personal character of the king or queen must, in such a country, influence the position of Christianity, however independent its inner power may be either of the favour or the frowns of royalty.

The reign of Radàma II. was, in its opening, bright with promise for progress. No young king could have had more brilliant prospects than his were. Ascending the throne as the liberator of the oppressed, the friend of justice, freedom, and advancement, no one could have divined that, in less than two years, that king, so beloved and in many respects so amiable, would meet his death by violence, after a revolution which most impartial observers will admit was inevitable, and on the whole beneficial to the country. It is difficult to explain, without going into details foreign to our present purpose, how all this came about. And even with all the information possible to obtain, there are points inexplicable even to those intimately acquainted with the political events of Madagascar at that time. Suffice it to say, that an unwise commercial policy; a too ready compliance with the schemes of designing foreigners, who led him into habits of excess; a secret engagement with a French company, by which large and most valuable portions of the island would have been ceded to France; disregard for the opinions of his ministers, to whom he owed his possession of the throne; his allowing justice and offices to be sold, and the functions of government to be usurped by a class of men called *ménamàso*, a kind of irresponsible ministry; his habits of gross and abominable licentiousness; and, towards the close of his reign, his partial patronage of, and partial intimidation by, the idol-keepers and diviners;—such were some of the varied influences which led to the revolution of April 1863, through which the young king met a violent death, and filled an unhonoured grave.

Many will remember the painful shock of surprise and disappointment which was felt in England on the 2nd of July, 1863, when the news was received of the death of the

king, and revolution in the government. It was difficult to explain satisfactorily the change which a few months had produced, or to understand how one who had manifested so much that was admirable, should have been so unwise a king, and so licentious in his private life. Although many of the English residents in the capital knew that there were secret causes for apprehension, they yet hoped for the best, and were unwilling to believe that Radàma's evil habits could really have so fatal a result. But his insane proclamation, obstinately persisted in, permitting all quarrels, whether between individuals, villages, or tribes, to be settled, not by law, but by fighting, would have rendered the whole country a scene of civil war. This made it impossible to come to any terms with him, and brought on the crisis of his fate.

During the greater part of Radàma's reign, Christianity had perfect freedom. Indeed, with the smiles of royalty, and the favour shown to it by men of high influence and position, there was danger lest it should become enervated through such outward prosperity. It was no longer dangerous or discreditable to be known as a Christian—it was rather advantageous in a worldly point of view; and thus there was risk of the native churches becoming worldly in spirit, and opening their communion to merely nominal Christians.

Divine service was held at the Stone House, in the presence of the king and his favourites; Mr. Ellis read the Bible with him almost every day, and he often seemed impressed by the great truths which his friend and counsellor strove to enforce on his understanding and heart. Nor would it be altogether just to say that these were appearances, put on to suit the occasion. Whatever Radàma may have done previous to his accession, after he became

king he never professed to be a Christian, although he often said he hoped to become one. He knew well that Christianity and his private habits were utterly incompatible. Although Mr. Ellis's novel position may have to some extent dazzled, and so blinded him to the weak points of Radàma's character, yet there was much that led him to hope that the king's better nature would prevail; or rather, that by yielding obedience to the Spirit of God he would be strengthened to overcome the temptations to which he was exposed. The king gave a hearty welcome to all the English missionaries, and showed them much personal kindness; while he readily agreed to the proposal to build the memorial churches, and gave every facility for acquiring the sites.

Only very shortly before his death did Radàma change in his conduct toward Christianity and its adherents. And there is reason to think that the superstitious fears excited in his mind somewhat affected his reason. Pretended messages were brought to him by the idol-keepers and others interested in maintaining heathenism; these purported to come from his departed ancestors, warning him that Christianity and the customs of the foreigners must be destroyed if he would really be king. At the same time a remarkable dancing mania, called *Ìmanènjana*, made its appearance in some of the villages near the capital. Numbers of people were affected by it, and it was adroitly fomented and made use of by the diviners and heathen leaders to forward their ends and influence the king's mind.* It was reported that he had consented to the assassination of Mr. Ellis and many of the leading native Christians, but this was an act so thoroughly opposed to all his previous conduct, that, if true, it can only be explained by the

* See Appendix F., and "Madagascar Revisited," pp. 253–271.

supposition of a temporary aberration of intellect. It is true that he had lately shown some jealousy of Christianity and its influence, as being a power apart from and uncontrollable by him.

At last the closing tragedy came. Few can think of that untimely end without bitter regret. His words, "I have never shed blood," said to have been the last he uttered before the cord was passed round his neck, were so true, so like his former self, and yet so irreconcilable with what must have resulted had his intended proclamation been carried out, that it would seem as if his former clear perception and humane feelings had returned in his last moments.

His consort, Rabòdo, was proclaimed queen under the name of Ràsohèrina. As already described, she engaged to govern constitutionally, and it was soon evident that the action which had been taken by the prime minister and the other members of the government was dictated by no opposition to real progress (as the French have so constantly tried to represent) or dislike to Christianity, for among the articles in the document presented to the queen were the following:—

"Perfect freedom and protection is guaranteed to all foreigners who are obedient to the laws of the country.

"Friendly relations are to be maintained with all other nations.

"Protection, and liberty to worship, teach, and promote Christianity, are secured to the native Christians."

The revolution was no bloody outbreak against foreigners or civilisation; it was only directed against absolute authority and foreign usurpation. No lives were sacrificed, except those of the king and his evil counsellors. No property but theirs was injured—no violence was offered

to peaceable subjects. For such a people it was a remarkable example of the influence of order and respect for law. There was no indiscriminate bloodshed or vengeance. For a would-be absolute king a constitutional queen was substituted, bound by obligations to her subjects as much as they were bound to her.

The new queen was not a Christian, nor did she profess any personal liking for Christianity. On the contrary, she was a devoted idolater, strongly attached to old usages, believing in divination, and implicitly complying with every direction of those who worked it. Yet, in all other matters, she showed a shrewd good sense, and exercised a strong will, which made her sovereignty something more than a name. Though a heathen, she was a just and merciful ruler, sincerely desirous of diminishing the heavy burdens under which the people had suffered during her aunt's reign. She never used even her own personal influence to oppose Christianity, although, in a thousand nameless ways, she might have done so without violating her formal engagements to tolerate and respect it. The only thing which the Christian part of the community had to complain of, was the enforced attendance, at times, of officers, soldiers, and workpeople at government work and other service on the Sabbath; and their being also obliged, in common with their fellow-subjects, to be present and take part in dancing and other public amusements of which they disapproved. Yet these annoyances could hardly be called persecution, nor is it probable they were intended as such. The queen and her government, not being professedly Christian, merely ignored the right of any portion of the people to exemption from the public service to which all were liable.

That this is the correct view of the matter is confirmed by several incidents well known to those who formed the

English mission at the capital. On more than one occasion, when the queen and court were staying at Ambòhimànga, the government service on the Sunday was so arranged that the Christian officers and soldiers might have the opportunity of attending worship once at least in the day, particularly if it happened to be the communion Sunday. So, again, the queen is reported to have said to her servants and immediate attendants: "I know that many of you are praying people" (*i.e.* Christians), "and like to attend worship; and perhaps you may be afraid that, as I do not pray, I shall be displeased with you for so doing. But do not imagine that; those who like to go shall go. Nevertheless, remember, that I shall expect that you who say you are Christians, and thus *profess* to be better than other people, will *act* better than other people. I shall expect that you will not lie or cheat or steal or do evil as others do, but show by your conduct what a good thing 'the praying' really is." It is needless to point out how this kind and, withal, shrewd speech of the queen bore unconscious testimony to the purity and elevation of character produced by genuine religious principle. And although the queen's private life was too much after the old heathen model, she seemed in many respects to be influenced by the beneficent and kindly spirit of Christianity.

With the exceptions above mentioned, there was almost perfect religious freedom during the reign of Ràsohèrina—liberty to worship, liberty to preach and print and instruct. If Christianity was not patronised by royalty, it was not, on the other hand, oppressed. There was, literally, "a fair field and no favour," alike for heathenism and for Protestant and Roman Catholic missions. During five years of the queen's reign there was continued progress, both in political and religious matters. The commercial prosperity

of the country was promoted by treaties with England and America, as already described. In the first of these, religious liberty was secured both to natives and foreigners. To the honour of our own beloved Queen, a message was sent from her to Queen Ràsohèrina, asking, as a personal favour to herself, that there might be no persecution of the Christians; this wish was embodied in the draft of the treaty sent from England. In compliance with this request, the treaty contained the following words: "In accordance with the wish of Queen Victoria, Queen Ràsohèrina engages that there shall be no more persecution of the Christians in Madagascar." These engagements were most faithfully kept, not in the letter merely, but in the spirit as well; while by much personal kindness to the missionaries, the queen showed that, even if she did not understand the higher aims of their work, she still appreciated their efforts for the good of her people, and gave every facility for them to pursue their labours.

During her reign, congregations steadily increased; new places of worship, both in the capital and the surrounding villages, were opened; the memorial churches were commenced, one being completed and dedicated in the year before the queen's decease; the printing-press was in active operation; and the dispensary and mission hospital were the means of relieving thousands of sick and diseased. At the end of the year 1867, there were twelve congregations in the capital, and eighty-six in the country districts; about 5000 in church-fellowship, and a professedly Christian population of about 21,000. Nor was this remarkable increase confined to numbers only; it was equally true with respect to knowledge and intelligence. Instead of the "gospel talk" of the first few months, a class of native preachers was being raised up who were able to speak with ability

and power. The standard of church-fellowship was gradually raised as regards purity and consistency. The English missionaries had acquired such a mastery of Malagasy habits of thought and language, as to be able to address their congregations with force and accuracy; while in their daily classes for the study of the Scriptures, training the native preachers, and instructing the more intelligent young men in theology, they were gaining an increasing influence over the people, and helping to mould their religious ideas. The converts themselves were beginning to require a higher order of instruction than they could appreciate at first; and many were advancing from the imperfect knowledge of children to the "stature of men in Christ."

A Christian literature was commenced; a large edition of the Scriptures, revised by Mr. Griffiths, was disposed of; catechisms, school-books, tracts, and translations of some of the most useful English religious books, were prepared and widely circulated. On the 1st of January, 1866, the first Malagasy periodical was issued—an illustrated bimonthly magazine, called "Tèny Soa" ("Good Words"); and in the following year, the first sheets of a commentary or notes on the Gospels, with introductory history, introduction to each book, etc., were struck off. All these, except the Bible, which had been nearly completed in England before the reopening of the country, were admirably printed at the mission-press by native lads and young men, under the supervision of Mr. John Parrett, who trained them in composing, press-work, binding, and other processes necessary in the preparation of books.

Under Mr. Charles Stagg's superintendence, the central school was erected, and a system of education on the British School plan organised. This was intended as a kind of advanced school, and as a place for training young men

and women as teachers for other schools in the capital and its neighbourhood. Unhappily, Mr. Stagg's death, about seventeen months after his arrival in Madagascar, checked these plans for a considerable time. Still, the incomplete course of instruction several young men had received, had fitted them to a great extent to become teachers of others; and many of them were put in charge of district schools. After Mr. Stagg's death, in February 1864, the school system necessarily became more congregational in character. Most of the churches in the city had day-schools connected with them, and so also in the case of the larger villages. The upper classes were taught English, in addition to the education given to the rest of the scholars in reading, arithmetic, writing, geography, grammar, Scripture history, and singing. On the Sundays, religious instruction was imparted in the interval between Divine service, much in the same manner as in English Sunday-schools.

The more striking characteristics of Malagasy Christianity during the reign of Ràsohèrina, may be briefly summed up in the following particulars:—

None of us engaged in missionary work could fail to be struck with the intense desire and craving for knowledge on religious subjects shown by the Malagasy. This was evident in the eager interest in Bible-classes, the desire to learn to read and to obtain books, and the spirit of hearing awakened amongst the people generally. Many of the young men were accustomed to attend almost all the classes held by the different missionaries, not feeling satisfied with those held by their own pastors only. Very soon after the reorganisation of the mission, a missionary prayer-meeting was commenced. These services were held sometimes in the morning, sometimes in the afternoon, of the first Monday in each month, and were always largely

attended—the most capacious chapels in the city being quite inadequate to contain the people. On one occasion, after the usual service was over, a special meeting was held of the native pastors, deacons, and leading people of all the congregations. There were no Europeans present, and we were somewhat curious to know what was the object of the meeting. It transpired that it was held to consider what further means the native Christians could use to gain a fuller and clearer knowledge of the Word of God. Most of them had seen the books in the missionaries' libraries, and were often astonished at their large numbers, as it seemed to them; while they were further surprised to find that the majority of such books were notes, comments, and explanations of the Bible and its doctrines. They said to each other, "How good a thing it would be if we could have some of these put into Malagasy! Many of us, especially those in the country, have no helps to instruct in the meaning of the Scriptures; we cannot easily go to the missionary for explanation, but in such books as these many of our difficulties would be removed." They therefore sent a deputation to the missionaries, with the modest request that they would immediately translate and print the whole of Matthew Henry's "Commentary" and Barnes's "Notes"! As a guarantee of their sincerity, a long list of subscribers was brought, so that there might be no doubt of the work being purchased. Although somewhat amused, we were nevertheless delighted at the spirit which this application showed; and although we did not literally comply with their wishes, two of our number (the Revds. R. G. Hartley, M.A., and W. E. Cousins) were requested to undertake an original commentary on the Gospels, suited to their requirements, in the form already mentioned.

A very interesting testimony to the love of the people

for the Scriptures was borne by an independent witness—Captain R. A. Brown, R.N., of H.M.S. *Vigilant*. This officer visited Queen Ràsohèrina when she was staying on the eastern coast; and afterwards, walking through the camp, was struck by the fact that a good many of the higher officers were Christians. Those who accompanied him said, "Their large well-bound Bibles could not but arrest the eye; and they talked about the sacred volume with real and sincere pleasure."*

However large the proportion of merely outward attention to religion (and it can hardly be expected to be otherwise in the peculiar circumstances of such a state of society), yet we were often astonished at the willingness shown to hear the truths of the Gospel. Wherever a new building for worship was opened, either in the centre or the outskirts of the capital, or in the country districts, there, in a comparatively short time, people came to fill it; and although we wished to see more than this, we could but remember that "faith cometh by hearing," and thank God for giving the inclination to attend the means of grace. And, with this, there was often evident a feeling of deep thankfulness and gratitude to God for His goodness. At the opening of a large village church about two miles to the north of Antanànarìvo, a reference was made by one of the preachers to circumstances of the persecution, which deeply touched the hearers. The speaker, Andriambèlo, is one of the most eloquent native preachers, and co-pastor with the Rev. W. E. Cousins of the largest city congregation. He suffered much during that time of trial, losing almost all his property, his wife being taken away from him, and having to wander about exposed to dangers of all kinds; he had endured the loss of all things for Christ's

* See "The Times," Oct. 1867.

sake. In the course of his sermon, he said: "I see two or three here present, who, with myself, formed a little company of Christians who used to come out to this village to pray in the days of darkness" (*i.e.* persecution). "You remember how frequently we used to leave the city at night, after gunfire, and cautiously steal out and come by separate paths to the village; how we went to the house of a friend whom we trusted, and there, in a room in the roof, met together to praise and pray, and encourage each other to persevere, to hold on in our way, and not be afraid of the wrath of the queen. There, in darkness, we used to repeat to each other portions of God's Word—sing hymns, but very softly, almost under our breath, lest we should be heard. And then, as morning drew on, we returned to the city in the same cautious way that we had left it. What times of fear and danger were those! But now all is changed. Here we are, four or five hundred in number, in this beautiful house, worshipping God without fear, none daring to make us afraid. How thankful we ought to be!" And there ran through that congregation a thrill of gratitude, a deep sigh of thanksgiving, as with almost one heart they thanked God that the darkness was past, and the true light again shining upon the land. And we who had come from England felt deeply moved as we remembered the past, and compared it with the rest and security then enjoyed.

Another point worthy of remark was the spirit of self-help developing amongst the native Christians. The English missionaries have endeavoured to rouse the people to exertion and liberality, and to prevent them from thinking that they must look to British churches for money for this and that object, while many of their own number were well able to give. Knowing the demands at home for

benevolent objects of all kinds, they have felt it to be no less due to those who make sacrifices to support foreign missions, to economise resources, than beneficial to the Malagasy Christians to exercise self-denial, and feel their own power to support the Gospel by voluntary offerings. The result has proved the wisdom of this course. Although a large proportion of the congregations are poor—although giving liberally has never been a habit inculcated by their idolatry, and they are naturally a most money-loving people —yet there has been a large amount of liberality evoked by throwing them on their own resources, and letting them see the power of combined action in freewill offerings.

This spirit of self-help has been shown in a variety of ways—perhaps in none less strongly than in the large number of places of worship built since the reopening of the country to Christianity. As congregations have increased, the necessity for larger buildings to meet in has arisen; the small dwelling-houses used for the first few months have in almost every case been exchanged for neat and durable structures of clay, or wood, or sun-dried brick. Applications for aid in erecting churches, chapels, and schools, are not unknown to those who are benevolent towards religious objects in England; but for the last four or five years, such requests have rapidly multiplied in Madagascar, and sometimes their number has exceeded what we could satisfy with the limited means at our disposal. Like most foreigners, many of the Malagasy entertain the delusive idea that every Englishman is made of money. But while we felt it a duty no less than a pleasure to head the subscription-lists, yet in very many cases, the people themselves have given liberally both in money and labour to build their own churches.

The congregation worshipping at Àndohàlo, in the centre

of the capital, gave no less than $460 for the land upon which their new church is built. A large portion of this sum was given by themselves; and when we remember that, from the smallness of wages and the difference in the relative value of money and produce, a dollar is equal to between one and two pounds in England, this subscription was, as Mr. Hartley wrote, "a new and wonderful feature amongst such a people as the Malagasy;" and it must not be forgotten that a subscription of a few dollars from an officer of middle rank is equal to his whole ordinary money expenditure for as many weeks. This church was built of timber, in an ornamental style, thanks to the liberal gift of an English lady, but much was given in addition by the people, especially in labour. I was delighted, when inspecting the work of putting in the foundations for the building, to see people of high position down in the trenches, working away harder than the paid labourers, for they felt it to be a labour of love.

So also with another congregation in the country, at a village called Manjàkarày. I took special interest in these people, frequently preaching to them, and taking a Bible-class in conjunction with my friend, the Rev. George Cousins, their pastor. Mr. Cousins and I heartily joined them in their proposal to build a new place of worship, and aided them as far as we were able. I prepared drawings for a neat building of sun-dried brick, in a simple Gothic style—a structure that should be perfectly practicable for them to erect, and yet which should serve as a model for an improved style of village church, having something of an appropriate ecclesiastical character. But the most pleasing feature in the work was the hearty and joyous interest which almost every member of the congregation took in the building. All helped to do the actual work,

whether in digging the trenches, putting in the foundations, or building the walls. The whole building was divided amongst the people, and all put their hands to it. Officers of high military rank were laying the bricks—one at a buttress, another at a doorway, and another at a window; their wives, some of them ladies of the court, bringing them the materials, and mixing the mortar for their husbands. And when the church was dedicated, there was a gladness which never could have been felt had it been given to them by others. Everyone felt that he had some share in the building, that his own hands had helped to raise its walls, and that he had made sacrifices for it.

The spirit which animated the people was further shown by their zeal in rebuilding their church, after its partial destruction by a whirlwind accompanied by a waterspout, a few months after I left the country. Mr. Cousins' letter will best describe this occurrence. He wrote:—

"You will be grieved to hear that our pretty little church at Manjàkarày is in ruins. A very violent wind carried the roof off and pulled down the walls. About fifty houses were unroofed and damaged, and walls were blown down by the sheer force of the wind. This happened on a Saturday night, and when the people went on the Sabbath morning, they just sàt down in dismay and cried—men and women. Their meeting, however, did not end in crying, but they all determined that, with God's blessing, they would rebuild their church, but make it *firmer and larger*. We had a meeting next day, and arranged to divide the work among the people; and I undertook in faith a sixth part of the work, trusting that when kind friends in England hear they will send a little help. The new building will cost $300, or if it has a tiled roof, which many of the people desire, nearly $500. We are seeking to teach

our churches here to provide their houses of prayer, but it is necessary we should help them to do it by example as well as by precept; and all of us have to exercise a good deal of self-denial, that we may encourage them to build good and substantial places of worship, and maintain an independent existence. It is no feeble sign of life, that people so recently living in heathenism should be ready at once to undertake so much within a few months of their having built the house once."

These are but examples of what has been going on for the last four or five years all around the capital. The other missionaries could give similar instances of zeal and liberality; the above are merely recorded as having come under my own immediate observation.

Another way in which the people have begun to help themselves, is in the support of the native ministry. The political and social arrangements of the country, and the requirements of the government service, have made it difficult hitherto to set apart men to give their whole time and attention to spiritual work. Still, something has been done towards this end, and nothing is paid to native pastors from foreign sources, all that they receive being the freewill offerings of their congregations. Although the English missionaries have had, for a time, to become pastors of churches, their object is to train a native pastorate, while they themselves are working as pioneers and evangelists, exercising a general superintendence, preparing a Christian literature, and training others to teach and preach. Some time ago, the church at Anàlakèly showed in a practical way how they were beginning to understand the precept, "Let him that is taught in the word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things." They said to each other: "We feel that preparing a

sermon is a work requiring time and attention and thought; and those who do this work ought to have time for preparation. Yet, some of those who preach to us are poor, and cannot well afford to give up a day or two for our instruction. We ought to help them, and give them money to buy food while they are studying the Scriptures, and preparing to give us the word of life." Accordingly, it was decided that *sixpence* should be given to each preacher at every service, to compensate him for the loss of his time. And although we may smile at such a sum, yet it would procure abundance of plain food for a day; and its payment is at least a step in the right direction, as an acknowledgment of the principle, "The labourer is worthy of his hire," and that "They who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel."

It need hardly be said that a missionary spirit has been active amongst the native churches; for that is surely hardly worth the name of Christianity where no desire exists, and no exertion is made, to bless others. Besides, the whole history of Christianity in the island is connected with personal effort and the truest missionary work, in the highest sense of the word. The missionary prayer-meetings, as already mentioned, are always crowded and hearty services—the prayers, the addresses, and the hymns, breathing earnest desires for the extension of the Gospel through the whole of Madagascar and throughout the world. Collections are made at these meetings, and appropriated to evangelistic work carried on by the congregation at whose church each service is held.

In 1867, the church at Àndohàlo took a still more decided step in the work of Christianising distant portions of the island. A young man of great intelligence, a good preacher, and of earnest spirit, who had expressed his

willingness to go, was set apart as a missionary to a tribe called the Àntsiànaka, who live at a distance of several days' journey to the north of the capital. There were a number of Christians in that neighbourhood who had been long asking for some one to instruct them in the way of God more perfectly. This young man had been well educated, but was a slave; however, with the help of some friends in England, his freedom was purchased, and he left with his wife and children for his distant place of labour, with the prayers and hearty good wishes of his friends. The congregation at Andohàlo engaged to provide a yearly salary of sixty dollars, and find him a house. The value of such an example in stimulating the other churches can hardly be overestimated, in addition to the benefit of such a man's labours in the locality itself. By the latest information his work was proceeding most prosperously; the heathen population were kind and friendly, a place of worship had been erected, and his prospects of success were most encouraging.

Mission-work of a less formal character, yet with very important results, has been largely carried on by Christian officers and soldiers who have been sent to distant places on government service at military posts. Wherever they have gone they have called their families and dependents and inferior officers around them, and commenced religious worship. In most cases these assemblies have been gradually increased by people of the neighbourhood who have been attracted to the services; so that, in every part of the island, little Christian communities are scattered, and in some places have increased to considerable congregations. The Christian society in the Àntsiànaka country, just referred to, probably owes its origin to such efforts of "devout soldiers." At many of the ports, and also at important

places in the interior, the lieutenant-governor has been the pastor or chief preacher of the congregation.

Since my return to England, I have frequently been asked, "What kind of Christians are your people in Madagascar? What is the standard of religious life there?—for we hear such stories of the low state of some converts in heathen lands, that we feel dubious as to the sincerity of many." To such questions I would reply, our Christians in Madagascar are really very much like Christians in England. Notwithstanding the spread of education and intelligence at home, and the number of copies of the Bible circulated, how small, after all, is the knowledge of God's Word among *us!*—how little Bible-*reading* there is! In Madagascar we have not the knowledge possessed by congregations in England. We have a great variety of Christian character—people of deep religious experience, who have suffered much and felt much; we have earnest and self-denying people; and we have others, who, like numbers of Christians at home, do little, and show small proof of the transforming power of the Gospel. Yet, considering all the circumstances, the short time we have had to work, and the fewness of our number, we are often astonished at the undeniable success, at the large amount of real genuine Christian principle, at the love and faith, and zeal and holiness, manifest in the lives of very many. Remembering the advantages of both, our churches in Madagascar may bear a favourable comparison even with those in England.

It may be mentioned that, as it was not so much through public preaching, or the *direct* influence of European missionaries, that Christianity maintained its position, and extended during the years of persecution, so it has been, to a great extent, since religious freedom has been secured. It has, from the first, been mainly spread through the

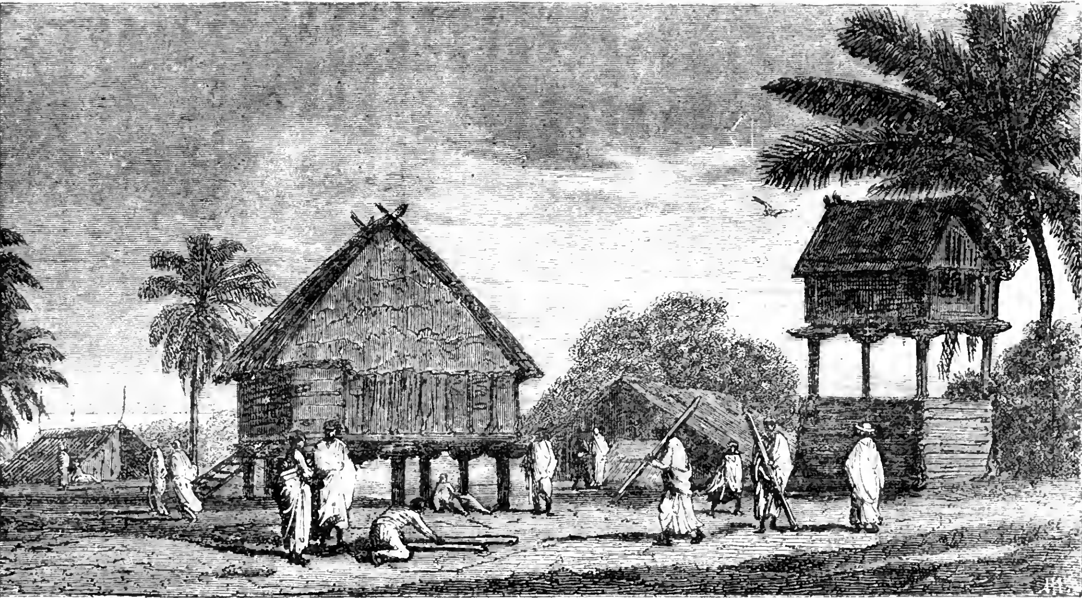
personal teaching and efforts of individual Christians, and by the not less powerful influence of their holy lives and changed dispositions. The heathen have said, "We knew such an one; he was formerly cruel, untruthful, dishonest; now he is kind and loving, speaking the truth, acting uprightly. This must be a powerful thing which has made such a change."

In addition to what has been said (and it might be largely added to) as to the influence of Christianity upon the native converts themselves, it has exerted a remarkable indirect effect upon the non-christian population and upon public morals. Just as in Europe, in many places where the highest influence of the Gospel has not been felt, it has yet done much to civilise and humanise, so also it has been working in Madagascar. We could but notice this in the higher tone of feeling with regard to the marriage tie, the decrease of divorce and polygamy, the greater value put upon human life, the disuse of cruel punishments, and the shaming out of former superstitious and licentious customs. An incident in connection with a disturbance which occurred at the accession of the present queen may be here recorded as an illustration of the influence of Scripture truth. After the apprehension of the offenders their fate, for some days, remained undecided. The majority of voices, at a kabàry held in the palace-yard, was for death; but strenuous efforts were made by the English residents to induce the government to spare their lives. In a letter they sent to the prime minister, urging him to advise the queen to merciful measures, they quoted some Scripture passages, and amongst others one from the Epistle of St. James, "He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy." This verse powerfully affected the mind of the minister; he could get no sleep,

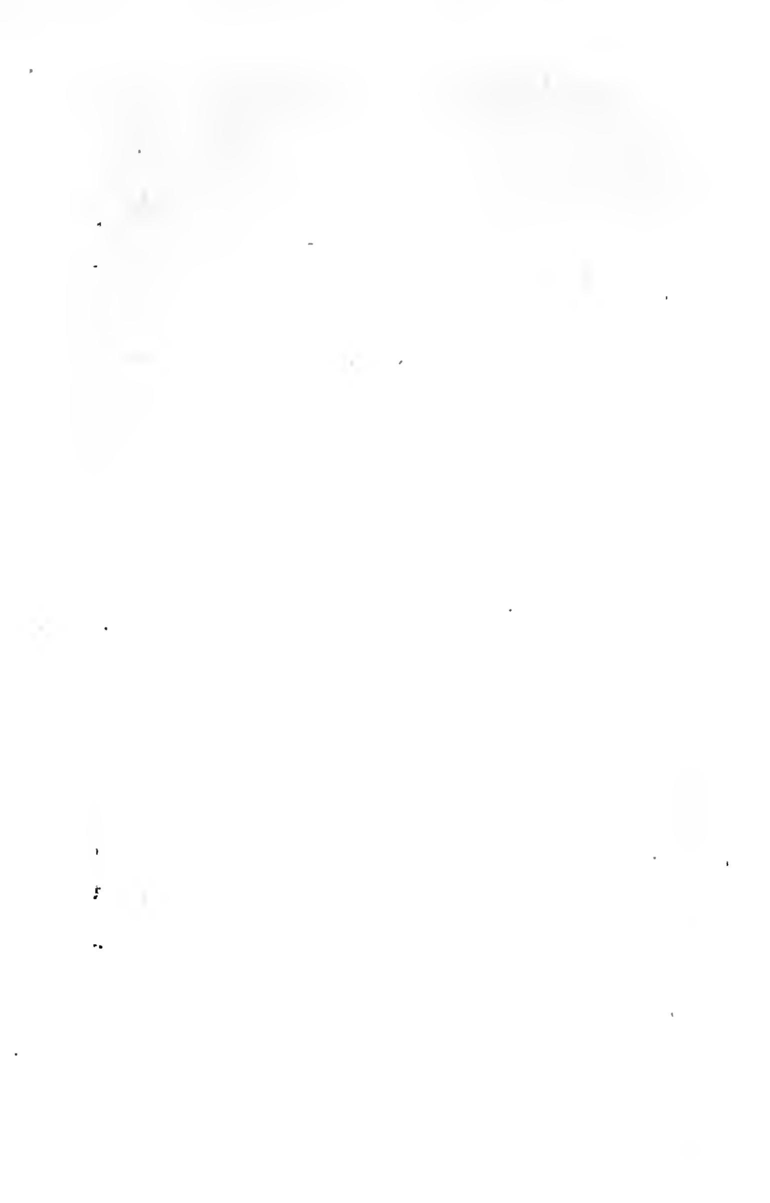
but paced his room, repeating, "These foreigners bring their Scriptures to *curse* me." But his better feelings prevailed; in the morning he advised the queen to commute the punishment of death into imprisonment for various periods; and thus closed, we may reasonably hope, the age of sanguinary punishments for political offences.

The remarkable disuse of former licentious customs has already been mentioned in describing the opening of the queen's new palace.* A recognition of the Sabbath was also a noticeable fact during the reign of the late queen; in some localities, markets which were formerly always crowded and busy as on other days, were gradually deserted by the salesmen on the Sunday, until a mere handful of people were left. The prejudices both against Christianity and Europeans have been rapidly passing away. One of the most powerful influences conducing to this change of feeling has been the medical mission. Although, perhaps, we cannot claim for its operations much direct spiritual benefit, yet it has done much indirectly to dispose the people to listen to the truths of the Gospel. Showing the benign and merciful character of our holy religion, how it seeks to benefit not merely the souls but the bodies of men, it has appealed to the most obvious needs of our common humanity, and proved a valuable auxiliary to the highest work of Christian teachers. Following the example of Him "who went about doing good" and "healing all manner of diseases of the people," Dr. Davidson has used all the resources of medical skill and science to remove disease and alleviate suffering. Short religious services precede each day's duties at the dispensary, and both English and native ministers attend at the hospital, to instruct the patients and point them

* See chapter xi.



NATIVE GRANARIES



to the Great Physician. In this way the motto of the Medical Missionary Society of Edinburgh, to whom the buildings now belong, is carried out: "Heal the sick, and say to them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

From a report lately issued by Dr. Davidson I give in his own words a few facts with regard to his special work:—

"During the past year the number of separate cases of disease treated at the dispensary has been 5116; and reckoning that each patient on an average returns three times, above 15,000 have been seen and prescribed for. About two-thirds of these belong to Antanànarìvo and its neighbourhood, and the remaining third come from more distant parts of the island. A morning service has been held for these patients and their attendants.

"While the dispensary has year by year been growing in importance, the hospital has been appreciated by the people beyond all our expectations. About 450 patients have been admitted in 1868, the number being limited only by my ability to attend to them. The patients have to a great extent contributed to their own support, the medicines being in every case supplied gratis.

"In addition to these duties, the education of the students has claimed an increasing share of my attention. At present, nine are connected with the institution, and about two hours daily have been devoted to their instruction; and I am, on the whole, satisfied with their progress. Through the kindness of friends in Edinburgh, the means of systematic instruction in anatomy and surgery have been supplied. A great deal of time and a considerable amount of labour have been expended upon the preparation or translation of textbooks. The new 'British Pharmacopœia' has been translated into the Malagasy language,

and various works in other departments of medical science have been progressed with."

Such is a very imperfect sketch of the progress made by Christianity during the reign of Queen Ràsohèrina. A steady and rapid advance, a widening and deepening influence, were evident in every branch of its operations. Not patronised by the government, yet not controlled or repressed, it appealed to the Malagasy as wise and reasonable men, and the old idolatry gradually sank into contempt. Had it not still had the countenance of the queen and some of the older officers and nobles, it would probably have hardly retained an existence in the capital and its immediate neighbourhood. As already mentioned, the royal visit to the eastern coast helped to give a favourable impression of Christianity to the tribes in that part of the island, and showed them that the queen and her government were, at least, not hostile to it.

Up to within a very short time of the queen's death, she appeared to retain her belief in idolatry and in the virtue of the divination; but just before her decease, it would seem as if some little light broke in upon her mind, and convinced her of the folly of trusting in the ancient gods of her family and country. During her illness, her majesty had been staying at a village a few miles distant from the capital, but the prime minister wished to bring her back to Antanànarìvo, fearing some disturbance, which actually occurred. Believing that the queen would implicitly obey any message from the idols, he went to the officer who presided over the idol-keepers, and told him he wanted a message from the idol to the queen, directing her to go back to the city. This officer objected, and said he could not compel God. However, the keepers themselves were sent for, and a little pressure gained the point; they

accordingly went to the queen, and told her Kélimalàza's message. She had some objection to being removed, and cross-questioned them, asking if the idol had made them dream the night before. They told a deliberate falsehood, and replied, "Yes; the idol had appeared in a dream, and had directed her to return to Antanànarìvo." For the first time in her reign she refused to obey, and all the prime minister's arrangements were upset. Some of the officers who were present ran off in a very excited manner to Dr. Davidson and M. Laborde, who were in the garden, shouting, "Beelzebub is conquered! Beelzebub is conquered!" This had been the idol's name for some years amongst those who had no faith in his power.

The queen knew something of Gospel truth, and her nature had considerable sympathy with its spirit of kindness and mercy. It seems not impossible that in her inmost heart she cherished a deeper faith in the truth and its Divine Teacher; for it is said that, on one occasion, "her adopted son brought to her a picture which had been given him of the Virgin Mary, having one or two brief prayers that might be offered to her. Looking at it for awhile, she said, "No, no, my boy, these will not do; whenever you pray, make all your prayers to the Lord Jesus Christ!"

The death of Ràsohèrina and the accession of her cousin, Ramòma, under the title of Rànavàlona II., was the signal for another great advance. This was owing to the feeling of the prime minister and other members of the government, who are enlightened men, that the follies of idolatry and divination are incompatible with the progress of intelligence and Christianity among the people, and that something more than a negative recognition of the latter should be made. Accordingly, at Ramòma's accession no idol was

brought out into the palace balcony to sanctify the new sovereign at her public recognition by the populace.

The marked renunciation of idolatry at the coronation of the present queen has already been fully described. The absence of the idols, the presence of a Bible instead of charms, the passages of Scripture inscribed on the canopy over the throne, and the enlightened sentiments of civil and religious freedom in the speech of the queen and the prime minister's reply, all testified to the great advance in the thought and feeling of the country.

There was, indeed, by this time hardly a family of influence or respectability some at least of whose members were not professed Christians; while many people of rank, and several nearly connected with royalty, were preachers and pastors of the native churches. Almost all the intelligent young men were more or less under Christian influence and instruction. The policy of the London Missionary Society, to concentrate for the present all its efforts upon the capital and central province, was a wise one. Guiding the leading thought and intelligence of the country, bringing the power of Christianity and enlightened views to bear upon the most advanced civilisation and knowledge of the island, they were virtually gaining access to the whole of Madagascar. Antanànarìvo won for Christ was an immense stride towards winning the whole of Madagascar for Him.

The position of affairs at the time, the mingled hopes and fears of the missionaries for the future, will best be described by extracts from their own letters. The Rev. G. Cousins wrote on the 30th of June, 1868: "Heathenism as a system, and as supported by the government, and as one of its supports, may be said to have ceased. Especially during the past three months there has been a most won-

derful advance. Queen Ràsohèrina was heathen enough herself in character and sentiments to counteract, to some extent, the more enlightened views of some of the leading members of her government, and she had strength of will enough to hinder them from taking the matter entirely out of her hands. But now she is gone, and a change of the greatest importance has taken place. The new queen has, together with the prime minister and all the highest men in the kingdom, renounced idolatry, and turned from 'dumb idols to serve the living God.' . . . . Now, on every hand the people are crowding to their chapels, and none of the places are large enough. My own congregation has increased quite four hundred within a month, and in some of my villages there has been a proportionate increase. All are ready to listen to the preaching of the Gospel, and there is hardly a place of importance in the neighbourhood in which if a chapel were opened it would not speedily be filled. The places of worship all round the capital, as well as in it, are being enlarged, and new ones being built. At our committee-meeting on Friday last, we had between twenty and thirty of these under our consideration.

"We cannot hide from ourselves, though, that a large number of those who have recently rushed to the house of God, have gone there with very imperfect ideas and motives—some, perhaps, glad to find that they can now become Christians without offending the great people. They like moving in crowds, and are awfully servile and crouching to their superiors. Sometimes my heart almost fails me at the sense of our weakness, and the demands of duty and faithfulness. 'Who is sufficient for these things?' Still one cannot but feel deeply grateful to God for leading the people to His house, where they hear the preaching of His word.

"The first idea of a Malagasy who finds that his old belief, or superstitious no-belief, will serve him no longer, is a sort of deist's idea: he will worship the God who made him, and who protects him from day to day. At the same time he connects with this purpose and thought the reception of the Bible as his guide. He has scarcely any conception of Christ at first, and often finds great difficulty in thinking of God *in* man and *as* man. But if he has not made up his mind before, he begins to keep the Sabbath and join in the worship of God; that Christ is the Son of God he soon finds after he has 'entered,' as the phrase is here. For he finds so much about Christ in the reading and preaching, in the prayers and the hymns, that he soon sees that He is the 'chief corner-stone.' Herein we rejoice at the multitudes who are ready to listen, and we trust that He who induces them to hear will write His truth upon their hearts, that this nation may become in deed and in truth a God-fearing and Christian people."

A few months later, the Rev. W. E. Cousins wrote:—
"We have, all of us, as much work as we can possibly do. We have more than 30,000 Christians here, and 150 churches. We are just sending home our annual reports, and are quite surprised ourselves at the large increase since our last census. All Christians have reason to rejoice in the wonderful success of the Gospel here. During the first years of our work here, the old people stood aloof from Christianity; now they are all coming to our chapels. Grey-headed men who cannot read, and are now too old to learn, you would see in all our congregations. Of course, now that the queen has adopted Christianity, many will make an insincere profession of religion; but there must be an immense amount of real faith in the Gospel, even if we allow for some small mixture of insincerity."

This remarkable increase in the congregations was not the only evidence of the changes that were passing over the country. The government began to recognise the Sabbath as a holy day. In former reigns, the diviners, knowing the sacred character attached by the Christians to Sunday, had stated that of all the days in the week, Sunday and Thursday were the most lucky, but especially Sunday. Hence public receptions and many official ceremonies were held on that day. Now there is a great contrast. The American consul was recently told, when coming to the capital in order to exchange the ratified treaties, that, as no public business is transacted on Sundays, the queen would be unable to receive him until the Tuesday.* The government workshops were closed, and a proclamation was made in one of the large markets, to the effect that markets that had hitherto been held on Sunday should, in future, be held on Monday instead.

"Besides a large increase in the congregations, and a growth of inquiry and interest in religious subjects among the people, there are aspirations after a higher spiritual tone in the native churches. The preachers at Ankàdibévàva recently requested their missionary to meet them for prayer every Monday morning, that the blessing of God might follow the services of the Sabbath. At first they met in his own house, but as the number who came increased, the meeting was transferred to the chapel, and now more than two hundred meet for prayer at an early hour every Monday morning.

"The religious movement in the capital began to spread to the country round. Places formerly shut against the missionary are now open. At Ambòhimànga, the sacred

* "Missionary Chronicle," Nov. 1868.

seat of the idols and royal tombs, there are now two Christian congregations."

On Tuesday, the 17th of November, 1868, the second Memorial Church, that at Ambòhipòtsy, was set apart for divine service, and the sovereign of Madagascar joined with her subjects in public worship. After the usual hasìna had been presented to the queen by the prime minister, he delivered a stirring address, urging the people to become Christians, by trusting in Christ and accepting the Bible as the word of God. Combating the old idea that to do so was to worship the ancestors of the foreigners, he emphatically denied they would be thus detracting from the honour due to the sovereign's predecessors; affirming that they only worshipped the God who created them, and Christ who died for their guilt. Just before the service commenced, the queen, observing that the pulpit Bible was an old and worn copy, kindly sent down her own, a handsomely-bound one, for the use of the preachers.

At the fandroàna, or new year's feast, of 1869, during the ceremonies at the palace on the evening of the festival, three of the native pastors thanked God for His mercy, and besought His blessing on the ensuing year. A day or two afterwards the prime minister invited a large number of poor people to partake of his hospitality, and divided 230 dollars among them.

Just before the annual meeting of the London Missionary Society in May last year (1869), letters arrived informing the directors that the queen and the prime minister had been baptised on the 21st of February, at the palace, in the presence of a number of influential officers and heads of different tribes. This was not brought about in any way by the English missionaries; indeed, some of them were not aware of such a step being in contemplation until it had

been all arranged. The service was solely conducted by the native pastors, one of whom made a most faithful and searching address to those who thus made a profession of Christianity. The queen had been visited, and had passed under a course of instruction, just in the same manner as any of her subjects would have done.* The government showed, from the first, a prudent desire to give no possible cause of jealousy to the French Roman Catholic priests by favouring English Protestant missionaries. The services that were held at the palace were conducted solely by Malagasy preachers, and no European has officiated there before the queen. There would, therefore, be no pretext

* One of the missionaries wrote:—"The most important matter I have to communicate this month is that on Sunday, February 21, the queen and prime minister were baptised by Andriambèlo. A large number of the leading officers were present, and the fact has been made as public as possible. On the Friday evening before baptism was administered, Andriambèlo and Rahanàmy—one of the pastors at Ambòhipòtsy—were sent for to converse with the queen and prime minister, and to examine them as to their belief in the Saviour, and their reasons for wishing to be baptised; and their answers, Andriambèlo says, were very satisfactory. In conversation the queen told them that in former years, when she was still a girl, one of the former mission-preachers, at present co-pastor in one of the churches, was appointed to teach her reading and writing; but he, being afraid of the queen then reigning, did not say a word to her about the Saviour or the Gospel. Her late brother was at that time acquainted with Andriantsiàmba, one of the four who were afterwards burned at Fàravòhitra, and he used to receive visits from him. This man, Andriantsiàmba, took occasion to speak to the young girl about the Saviour and the salvation of the soul. And this, the queen says, was her first introduction to some knowledge of the Gospel. The prime minister also states that, during the same days of darkness, he received a copy of the Scriptures from one of the last of the martyrs (Razàfinàrina), and that he used to keep it hid within the courtyard, in a part of the inclosure where the queen kept her fighting bulls. The ways of God are wonderful, and we possibly may at the present time be reaping fruit from seed then sown in tears."

for the priests asking admission to the palace on the ground that the English Protestant teachers had access to the throne.

The full results of this last and important step have yet to be seen, but already the public feeling is, as might be expected, completely, and probably finally, set in the direction of Christianity. Letters sent by the same mail as that announcing the queen's baptism, report that the aggregate of the average congregations is 37,000, an increase of about 16,000 in the year. There are about 7000 church-members, about 150 stations, some 2000 children in the schools, and upwards of 600*l*. have been raised in the year for religious objects. Mr. Toy says: "Since the queen was baptised, almost all the higher officers are coming forward as candidates for baptism. I have now more than a hundred under weekly instruction. Among these are the chief of the idol-keepers, the late queen's astrologer, several of the present queen's household, the head of the civilians and other members of the government, many of whom are getting quite old men." Mr. W. E. Cousins mentions that "a hundred congregations are looking to us for help to build either new or larger chapels. About one-third of the chapels to be built will afford accommodation for from 800 to 1200 hearers each."

While we cannot but rejoice and wonder at the marvellous events by which almost every obstacle seems to be removed, yet we rejoice with trembling. The dangers of such a time of prosperity are obvious, and unless great wisdom and prudence are shown, they may easily prove more hurtful than a time of persecution. It is easy to perceive the risk of the spread of a worldly and formal Christianity, a mere outward conformity with religious observances, from the notion that to pray is a proper and

correct thing; while from the all-powerful influence of the government in every matter, there is not a little danger lest they should try to use Christianity as a political agency, and, as it proved too powerful to be repressed, that endeavours should be made to control and influence it for state purposes. The possibility of government interference with church matters, with preachers and native pastors, and with public worship, is not an imaginary fear, and might work serious mischief—especially with such a people as the Malagasy, accustomed to a servile regard for constituted authority.

Yet on the other hand we must rejoice that, by the public profession of Christianity by the queen and her government, the last *external* hindrances to preaching the Gospel in Madagascar have been removed, especially in distant parts of the island, where the dread of the old penal laws of the first Rànavàlona is still strongly impressed on the minds of the people. Access to these will probably be much less difficult than it has ever yet been; we shall be able to reach multitudes who have never yet heard the story of the Cross. During Ràsohèrina's reign, great jealousy was felt at any English missionaries settling anywhere in the island, except at the capital or on the eastern coast; and Fianàrantsòa, an advantageous position in the Bétsilèo district, where two native churches have existed for several years, could not be occupied. Now, however, free permission has been accorded, and every facility given by the government to commence a new station there; and this important town of the southern part of Madagascar will, it is hoped, prove a centre of light and knowledge to the tribes of that portion of the island. While it may be true that the Christianity of the present time cannot, in many cases, be of so high a type as that which has suffered

and endured, yet in every way, so Christ is preached, we must rejoice.

So then, with ardent hope, not unmixed with some misgivings, do our brethren now look forward to the future. The whole land is open; we have only to go and possess it. For many years to come, until an intelligent and earnest native ministry has been raised up, English missionaries will have still to lead the way—to superintend, to guide, and to counsel. And how wide the field is that is now before us! The capital, it is true, is largely Christianised, and the people of the central province of Ankòva are to a great extent brought into contact with religious teaching. There is a strong Christian element in Vònizòngo to the west, a little Christian colony at Fianàrantsòa southwards; another in the Antsiànaka country to the north, and mission stations on the east coast, together with small congregations scattered here and there at the seaports and other places; but the great majority of the inhabitants of the island—the Sàkalàvas, Bétsilèo, and Antsiànaka—are yet, with small exceptions, untouched by Christian effort. It is no time, surely, to introduce rival missions into the capital, and to begin controversies and divisions which are the bane and reproach of our English Christianity, while millions are perishing for lack of knowledge. The native churches and their English teachers need more than ever the sympathies and the prayers of our home churches. More help is required by our brethren in their enlarged responsibilities, and yet greater labours in preaching, in translating, and in training a native pastorate. Oh that a spirit of consecration may be given, that many Christian volunteers may arise to do battle with the darkness and ignorance yet to be overcome!—so that, before long, the knowledge of the Lord may

cover the island; and the whole of Madagascar, from Tamatave to Mojanga, from Cape Ambro in the north to Cape St. Mary in the south, may become one of "the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ!"

Reference has already been made, at the close of chapter xiii., to the intelligence recently received of the destruction of the national idols and the progress of Christianity in Madagascar. By the mail of December 1869, letters came announcing that the national idols had been destroyed by order of the government, that everywhere in the central provinces the heads of villages were following the example of their sovereign, and burning their sàmpys, and that the people generally were bringing their charms and everything connected with their idolatry to be consumed.

This decisive step appears to have been immediately caused by the treasonable language of the keepers of the chief national idol. The queen having during the autumn months of last year laid the foundation-stone of a royal chapel in the palace-yard, they felt that their influence was rapidly coming to an end, and especially were they provoked by the deprivation of their former honours, and being made liable to government service like the rest of the people. They were foolish enough to use threats, saying that if the queen did not return to the worship of her ancestors, the idol had "medicine that killed," *i.e.* poison. The destruction of the idols was probably only a question of time, and no doubt would have been effected at the opening of the queen's chapel; but the government felt that prompt measures were necessary, and that this was no time to trifle with treasonable conduct. A council was immediately called, and in an hour or two a party of officers, headed by the chief secretary of state, were on their way to the sacred village, Ambòhimànambòla, with orders to destroy the idol and its house, and everything connected with its worship. Amidst the terror of the people, the pieces of scarlet silk and bamboo-cane of which it was composed were consumed, and the spell was broken in the minds of all.

Next day, all the other national gods were committed to the flames. With that tendency, so strong in the Malagasy, to follow the example of their rulers, "the heads of the people told the queen, that as she was

burning her idols, of course they should burn theirs; and some of them assured her that if any refused to give up their charms and sàmpys, they would burn them and the sàmpys together. Basketsful of rubbish have been destroyed; but although rubbish in our eyes, many of the people believed that it would be impossible to destroy some of their honoured Penates, and they trembled as they stood round the fire in which they were blazing away."

The effect of this act of the government has been to lead the people generally to say, "As you have taken away our gods, you must send some one to teach us whom we are to worship." In very many places the congregations are described as meeting together with no one to teach them, and in some cases there is not any one of their number who can even read to them the Word of God. It is said that in 150 villages the people were thus meeting together without instructors.

But in the minds of the Christian part of the community there was immediately felt a deep sense of their duty to instruct their fellow-countrymen, now left without a religion. Meetings for deliberation were held, and it was arranged that teachers should be at once sent to the larger villages, and money was liberally subscribed towards the expenses of those who were appointed to the work. A kind of Home Missionary Society was organised, and men of long standing and tried Christian character were deputed to be evangelists to the chief idol towns. For the greater number of the villages where there were no religious teachers, men were found who were willing to go. A spirit of self-consecration and of liberality seemed poured out in an equal measure. At one church, Ambòhipòtsy, $500 were subscribed towards the necessary expenses, and fifty-four young men offered themselves for missionary work.

The congregations in the city churches and at the larger villages have been increased to a considerable extent; in many cases, three times the number of people which the buildings are arranged to accommodate are crowded, Sunday after Sunday, within their walls.

It may be easily imagined how the English missionaries at the capital feel the heavy responsibility now lying upon them as instructors of such dense masses of people, and as teachers and guides of those who have offered to go and teach others. Their cry is, "Send us help; pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into His harvest." In the spring of this year a large addition will be made to the staff of missionaries in the central and southern provinces; and in Vònizòngo, in the Bétsilèo country, and in several of the larger towns of Imérina, stations are to be commenced which will prove centres of

light and knowledge, and prepare for aggressive measures upon the idolatry of the outlying heathen districts.

In all these events we must surely recognise the mighty power of God. He has given testimony to the word of His grace. He has given a fresh and most vivid proof that His truth is no effete worn-out thing, but is still mighty to the pulling down of the strongholds of Satan, still powerful as when preached in apostolic days. And He is surely speaking loudly to us, and reminding us of our duty to the heathen world. This Malagasy people now looks to English churches for help and guidance. Let us ponder the words which may certainly be now applied to ourselves, without any irreverent wresting of the Scriptures: "For if thou altogether hold thy peace at this time, then shall their enlargement and deliverance arise from another place, and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

CHAPTER XVI.

RECENT CHRISTIAN WORK AND PROGRESS: MISSIONARY LABOURS OF OTHER RELIGIOUS BODIES.

Roman Catholic Mission—Zeal and energy—Number of priests—Small success—Reasons for this—Jealousy of the French—Biblical knowledge of Christian Malagasy—French misrepresentations—Visit of present queen to Roman Catholic church—Alleged letter of Radàma II. to the Pope—Pretended coronation of Radàma by priests—"Pious stratagem" to baptise Queen Ràsohèrina—*Protestant Episcopal Missions*—Bishop Ryan—His visit to the capital—Its object—His testimony to Christianity of people—Church Missionary Society's agents—Their work in Vòhimarina—Removal to Andèvorànto—Visit of Mr. Campbell to interior—Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Mission at Tamatave—Its work and discouragements—Death of Mr. Hey—*Society of Friends*—Mr. Sewell and Mr. and Mrs. Street—Educational and religious work—*Norwegian Missionary Society*—Station at Bétàfo.

ALTHOUGH the chief work of Christianising Madagascar has been carried on by the agents of the London Missionary Society, yet an account of Christian effort in the island would be very incomplete without noticing what has been done by other religious bodies within the last seven years.

First, in point of time, is the mission of the Roman Catholic Church.

We have already seen that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Portuguese and the French made attempts to plant missions on the east coast; the small success attending their exertions, and the unhappy impression caused by the persecuting spirit displayed, has also been detailed. In consequence of this feeling, both Radàma I. and Rànavàlona refused permission for Romish priests to settle at the capital; and although two Jesuit

fathers were there in 1857, they were disguised, and their real character was unknown to the native government. They shared in the plot to dethrone the queen, and shared likewise in the swift punishment in which all who took part in it were involved.

At the accession of Radàma II., advantage was speedily taken by the Romish Church of the liberty allowed to all foreigners to settle anywhere in the country. A mission was set on foot at Tamatave, and before Mr. Ellis could reach the capital, several priests and nuns had arrived at Antanànarìvo. Their large establishment at the island of Réunion enabled them to organise their mission in Madagascar without any delay. Other priests from France were fellow-passengers with Mr. Ellis in his voyage from Suez to Mauritius; and a numerous body of Jesuit fathers, lay brothers as workmen, and Sisters of Mercy, were settled at the capital before the arrival of the Protestant missionaries in August 1862. In the course of time, two places of worship were erected in excellent positions, while they had smaller stations in some of the villages, and a sort of farm at Sòatsimànampiovàna, where M. Laborde, the French consul, had his country-house and estate.

The zeal and energy with which they have laboured cannot be too highly admired. The Sisters of Mercy have done much in attending to the sick and the poor, and in acting as nurses. Those stationed at Tamatave watched most kindly over Mrs. Pearse, who died there of consumption on her journey homewards; and some of them at the capital offered to nurse Mr. Stagg, when he lay ill with the Malagasy fever. The sisters have had a large number of girls under instruction, while the boys' schools are conducted by the numerous priests of the mission.

A number of Malagasy lads were sent to the head-

quarters at Réunion to be trained in church-music, so as to act as choristers; and frequent efforts were made to attract the people on great festivals by elaborate musical services, accompanied by a brass band, at the celebration of mass. But, notwithstanding all this, their congregations have never been numerous, nor have they been able to make much impression on the people of the capital. Few persons of influence have become connected with them, and even the daughters of officers of high position, many of whom have frequented at the schools to learn embroidery, have not continued to attend the services after they have learnt all the Sisters of Mercy could teach them.

It is difficult altogether to account for the small success attending the zealous and persevering labours of so large a body of priests and nuns, amounting probably to thirty or forty in number. There is much in the pomp and splendour, the sensuous worship of the Romish Church, to attract people like the Malagasy, while the accommodation to human weaknesses of much of its doctrine is well known; yet the fact remains, that the Roman Catholic faith has made but few converts, and exerts little influence upon the people of Madagascar.

One reason for this may be found in the fact that the mission is almost exclusively a French one; and the political designs of France upon the island ever since its discovery, and more particularly the attempt through the Lambert treaty to gain sovereign power in Madagascar, have exasperated the Malagasy against the French and everything connected with them. The Roman Catholic mission is considered as part of the scheme for gaining power and influence for foreigners; and not without reason is it so regarded, when the connection of two priests with the plot of 1857 is remembered.

But a still more satisfactory explanation of the small progress made by the Romish Church in the capital is the fact, that the Malagasy have been too well instructed in the Word of God. Father Jouen, the head of the mission, in a letter to the Pope, said, "The whole Christianity of the people consisted in reading the Bible;" and although this is an extreme and onesided statement, yet it contains so much truth that it explains much of the ill-success of his work and that of his colleagues. The religion of the Malagasy is *founded* upon the Bible, and therefore the people have proved inaccessible to the delusions and follies of Romanism. The pomp and endless ceremonies of its services appear to the Christian Malagasy such an utter contrast to his own simple worship, that he finds it difficult to regard them as in any way a *religious* service. He will now and then look in, when passing, at the door of the Roman Catholic chapel; and with a puzzled expression, as he sees the genuflexions and ceremonies going on before the altar, says, "What fools these Frenchmen are! We never saw Englishmen commit such folly as this!" The good common-sense of the people, combined with their familiar acquaintance with the Bible, have prevented them from being entrapped by the sophistries of the priests; and many have, with all their simplicity, skilfully used the words of the old Book itself in reply to the specious arguments addressed to them.

It is not unnatural that great jealousy should have been shown at the increasing influence of the Protestant faith over the people, or that the English missionaries should be represented as "the enemy who seeks to sow tares in the field of the good man." Systematic attempts to misrepresent the character of their work and damage their reputation have been made from the first. Most of the French

and some of the English news about Madagascar come through this source. During my residence in the island, and previous to it, newspaper information as to Malagasy affairs was so uniformly a perversion of facts, both political and religious, that the wonder was to find a fair representation of the real state of matters. The absurdity of some of these statements was only surpassed by their malignity. Reference to a file of "The Times" for July and August, 1863, will amply substantiate the justice of these assertions.

Before Mr. Ellis's arrival at the capital, in 1862, statements had been industriously circulated that the king had become a Roman Catholic, and even that the native Christians had put themselves under the guidance of the priests—both of which reports, it is hardly necessary to say, were pure fabrications.

Efforts were made to induce Radàma II. to attend service at the Roman Catholic chapel, as he had been at Protestant worship; and he and his queen did accordingly comply with their wishes on Christmas Day, 1862. Ever since the opening of the Memorial Church at Ambòhipòtsy, at which the present queen and her court attended, the French have been constantly urging her majesty to go to a service at their new church at Imahamasina. Report says that, to accomplish their object, many arguments were used, and amongst others "that the treaty recently concluded requires that they be treated as the most favoured nation." On the other hand the court made many excuses, the whole of which clearly indicated their reluctance to comply with the request. At last consent to visit the building was obtained, and on Thursday, March 25, 1869, the court went. A throne was prepared and richly decorated for the use of the sovereign, while the chapel was decked with that artistic skill for which the French are proverbial.

Music of course was to be brought into requisition, and a laudatory national anthem was prepared; in short, everything which ingenuity could accomplish likely to attract and please the monarch was done. At about eight o'clock the queen left the palace with her usual guard and band. Arrived at the church her majesty was received by the French special commissioner and the officiating priests. Her majesty, having advanced halfway up the building, stood still, and the prime minister then presented hasìna on behalf of the people. This done, the queen prepared to leave, when the commissioner took her hand, urging her to occupy the seat prepared. The prime minister said, "The queen came to take hasìna because the house is hers."* The commissioner replied, "I see there is no love, only hatred to France." The minister rejoined, "There is nothing in the treaty to compel the queen to pray in a way she does not approve of;" and the court left, their stay in the chapel scarcely exceeding ten minutes.† The royal visit has therefore probably done more harm than good to the Romish cause.

Soon after Mr. Ellis's arrival in the capital in 1862, the sons of a number of the nobles and highest officers were put under his charge for instruction, and the queen subsequently sent her little adopted son to be taught by him. This was a great annoyance to the Jesuit fathers, and during the stay of the English and French diplomatic missions, who were sent to be present at Radàma's coronation, such representations were made to the king, not unmixed with something like menaces, that the child was suddenly taken away from Mr. Ellis's charge and sent to the Roman

* It will be remembered that, by Malagasy usage, all buildings and landed property theoretically belong to the sovereign.

† See letter from Mr. W. Pool in "English Independent," June 10, 1869.

Catholic school. There he continued for about three years. When the indemnity of $240,000 was forced from the Malagasy government by the French in 1865, the queen, in common with all her people, was so annoyed at the unjust character of the whole proceeding, that she determined that her child should no longer remain to be instructed by those who were connected with such unfriendly acts towards her country. The lad Ràtahìry was accordingly removed; he was not sent to any of the Protestant mission-schools, but, far more wisely, was put under the care of one of the native Christians. Ratsilaingia, a man of tried Christian character, who had been well educated by the first missionaries above forty years before, and who had suffered the loss of almost all things for his fidelity to conscience, was appointed to take charge of a school consisting of children connected with the royal family and members of the government. The queen, heathen though she was, sent to purchase Testaments, hymn and school-books for their use. No restriction was placed upon their teacher, and, as in the other Protestant schools, the reading of the Bible and religious worship formed part of every day's instruction.

While we would honour those who, according to their knowledge and belief, have been and still are labouring to spread what they think to be the truth, and while we gladly recognise the charity and practical Christianity shown by many members of the Roman Catholic mission, yet it will not be deemed irrelevant to relate here two or three facts as illustrating the *spirit* of Romanism in Madagascar—the same here as everywhere else; using questionable means to obtain its ends, and not disdaining to employ misrepresentation and deceit if the Church's interests may be furthered. We condemn, not *individuals*, but the *system*;

and we cannot but think that such facts as the following ought not to be lost sight of by those who are deluded with the idea that Rome is improved by the spirit of the times, and that its darker features are removed.

In a number of the "Annals of the Propagation of the Faith" (the authorised account of Roman Catholic missions) for the early part of 1862, two documents were given; one being a letter from Father Jouen, apostolic prefect of Madagascar, to the Pope, and another purporting to be a letter from Radàma to the same. The former of these is a characteristic production. The correctness of the statements made may be judged of by the assertion that the Catholics were the first to cultivate this virgin soil; and that the king not only permitted them, but, as far as in him lay, *commanded* them, to "go, preach and instruct wherever it may seem good." One sentence towards the close has, it must be admitted, proved strictly correct, but quite in a different sense from what its reverend author anticipated or hoped. "Happily," he wrote, "the Christians formed by the 'Methodist' missionaries, and whose whole Christianity consists in reading the Bible, do not appear, at least up to this time, to have prejudices against Catholicity; and we have grounds to hope they will soon see the enormous difference which exists between the cold and erroneous teachings of Protestantism, and the immense resources which the holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church offers to them, with its touching dogmas, the unity of its faith, the pomp of its worship, the treasures of its charity, the grace of its sacraments, and the all-powerful virtue of the holy sacrifice of the altar." True, Father Jouen; they *have* seen the "enormous difference" which exists between all these things and the simple and spiritual worship and faith taught by the New Testament.

The second letter, there is every reason to believe, was never written by the king. It is so unlike his well-known sentiments, so thoroughly a French production, and—most significant of all—wants that important verification of the genuineness of any letter, a signature, that it is highly suspicious, to say the least.

Another episode in the history of the Roman Catholic mission in Madagascar cannot be better told than in Mr. Ellis's own words. I venture to quote the passage from his book, "Madagascar Revisited." "There is a slight but extremely characteristic episode connected with the coronation, which, as it has been to some extent made public, it is perhaps right to mention here. Immediately after the coronation, it was reported in the capital that the king had been crowned by the Catholic priests in the palace, before they went to the public coronation. I took an early opportunity of asking the king if it really was so. He said that on the evening before the coronation, two priests came to ask if they might come in the morning to see the crown which had been presented by the Emperor, and to sprinkle it with holy water, to which he had consented; and that early in the morning Father Jouen and Père Finaz came to the palace, looked at the crowns, sprinkled water upon them, and then came unexpectedly to him, and put it on his head—as he supposed, to see how it would fit; that both himself and the queen were in their ordinary morning dress, unprepared for any proceeding of the kind, and were surprised at what the priest did—but that he attached no importance whatever to the act. The crowning was, in his estimation, the public act before the people.

"The following is the account given by the chief actor in this transaction, as published in some of the French and Mauritian papers (I translate from the French):—'And,

in fact, the first rays of the sun had hardly lighted up the summit of the palace when we presented ourselves, the Rev. Father Finaz and myself; immediately all the doors were opened, and we were enabled to prepare (*d'installer*) the altar of sacrifice. Certainly the reverend chaplain of his majesty * little imagined at that moment what was about to take place. What would he have thought, especially if he could have seen a royal crown placed upon the altar, and awaiting the blessing which the Roman Catholic priest must invoke upon it? Then, all things being prepared, I commenced the mass in the presence of the king, the queen, and certain confidential persons. A father of the mission attended me. The mass finished, I recited over the royal crown all the prayers prescribed by the Church; afterwards, having sprinkled it with holy water, and invoked upon it all blessings from on high, I took it between my hands, and approaching Radàma, placed it solemnly upon his head, while uttering these words: "Sire, it is in the name of God that I crown you. Reign long, for the glory of your name and for the happiness of your people!" It was nearly eight o'clock when this ceremony terminated, having had scarcely any witness but God and His angels.'"†

One more extract from the "Annals of the Propagation of the Faith," by which we learn that the late queen, who was always supposed to have lived and died a heathen, so far at least as outward acts went, died a good Catholic, probably without being herself aware of it. Father Jouen thus describes her unconscious conversion: "Then it was that, in her extremity, M. Laborde approached the royal

* Mr. Ellis, who had received a commission of this nature from Radàma.

† "Relation d'un Voyage à Tananarivo, à l'époque du couronnement de Radàma II., par Le T. R. P. Jouen, Préfet apostolique de Madagascar."

patient, who had recovered her full consciousness, and suggested to her some pious considerations suitable to the great act that was about to be accomplished. She answered by raising her eyes and her arms to heaven. And then, as if he were about to magnetise her, he called for a vessel of water, dipped his hands in it, and washed Ràsohèrina's forehead while pronouncing the sacramental words. None of those present had the least suspicion that this pious stratagem was made use of to regenerate a soul. Thus was baptised the sovereign of Madagascar, on Friday, the 29th of March, 1868, at five o'clock in the morning, by virtue of the precious blood, the feast of which is celebrated on that day. Three days later, on Monday, she went to heaven, as we confidently trust, to exchange her title as queen for that of patroness of the great African island—a patroness all the more zealous for the conversion of her people, as no one knew better than she did the extent of their miseries, and the depth of the darkness in which they are plunged. Glory be to God for all this! And may the noble-hearted man who so faithfully carried out the designs of Divine mercy be held in grateful remembrance!"

Comment on the foregoing extracts is surely unnecessary. A religion that requires and uses such means to gain its ends must be something very different from that taught by Christ and His apostles. With such examples before us—with the remembrance of Tahiti in the past, and the Loyalty Group in the present, and the cruelty and injustice inflicted upon the native Christians by the French authorities in both places, at the instigation of Romish priests—we cannot be too thankful that both France and the religion it patronises have so little influence in Madagascar; nor can we but heartily pray that the people may continue steadfast in the simplicity of the Gospel.

Protestant Episcopal Missions.

At the accession of Radàma II. an embassy of congratulation was sent by the British Government from Mauritius to bear presents to the king, and attend at his coronation as representatives of Queen Victoria. Major-General Johnstone, commander of the forces, was at the head of this mission, and was accompanied by the Right Rev. Dr. Ryan, bishop of Mauritius, who was anxious to see for himself the religious state of the country, and how he could best forward the interests of Christianity. The bishop was deeply impressed by the earnest and hearty character of the public services which he witnessed, and by the lasting influence of the steadfastness of those who had suffered during the persecution. In the course of his journey up the country, and during his sojourn at the capital, Dr. Ryan enjoyed the best opportunities of seeing the actual state of things, and forming an impartial estimate of the moral, religious, and social condition of the people. He bore most emphatic testimony, both at Port Louis and in England, to the thoroughness of the work done by the London Missionary Society.

Dr. Ryan's object in undertaking the journey he thus explained, in a sermon preached to his own congregation at Port Louis on the Sunday previous to his departure: "One end in view in seeking this personal knowledge, is to avoid anything like interference with the noble work of the London Missionary Society, a work which has stood the test of long years of fiery persecution, and has left results full of promise for the future. In so wide a field, however, as that large island, with its several millions of inhabitants, there is abundant room for the independent operations of our Church; and it is only the

part of plain consistency, when God sets before us an open door, to endeavour to profit by that opportunity, and endeavour to make His way known."

During the bishop's stay at the capital, his intercourse with Mr. Ellis was kind and fraternal, and it was mutually agreed that in any efforts made by the Church Missionary Society or the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, both of which he represented, the agents which those institutions might send forth should occupy some of those wide fields of ignorance and heathenism yet uncultivated; that thus no collision or interference should occur between different societies, but that they should pursue their several operations in the spirit of mutual goodwill and fraternal regard. Mr. Ellis having expressed his belief that the missionary staff then daily expected could sufficiently occupy the capital, Dr. Ryan determined to commence work on the eastern coast. He was unable to get the Liturgy of the English Church translated into Malagasy at Mauritius; but Mr. Baker, formerly connected with the printing-office at Antanànarìvo, but then living at Australia, undertook the task, and the Malagasy Prayer-book was printed in London at the expense of the Christian Knowledge Society.

In the year 1864, the Church Missionary Society sent out the Revds. Messrs. Campbell and Maundrell to commence a mission amongst the tribes of the north-east districts of the island. They made more than one unsuccessful attempt to reach Madagascar, but were driven away by storms—once as far as the Seychelles group, several hundred miles to the northward. Undeterred, however, by the perils and hardships they had undergone, they sailed again from Mauritius in November, and reached Vòhimàrina, the chief port of the province of the same name, at the extreme

northerly point of Madagascar. Here they laboured with apostolic zeal and earnestness for eighteen months, amongst an almost entirely heathen population. Their head-quarters were at Ambòanio, a town about three hours' distance, by palanquin, from the place where they landed.

"When they first arrived there the aspect of their work was encouraging. The governor was a Christian, who had endured suffering for the truth's sake during the reign of Rànavàlona, and for a time seemed anxious to profit by intercourse with the missionaries. The people also gave them a hearty welcome, and on the Lord's-day came in considerable numbers to be taught. But after a time, as the Gospel began to tell upon the sinful habits of the people, which, handed down from generation to generation, had interwoven themselves with the social structure, opposition arose. An attempt was made to remove the missionaries from Hiaràna, and prevent them from visiting the people in the interior. Placed in trying circumstances, they did not meet that Christian sympathy which they had expected from those in authority. Eventually it was found that the district in which they were placed was very thinly peopled, and shut out from other parts of the island, while their communication with the Mauritius was tedious and uncertain. It was then decided that they should explore the country to the north and south of Ambòanio, if perchance some locality more eligible as a missionary centre might be found; Mr. Campbell going south round the head of the Bay of Antongil, while Mr. Maundrell pushed north as far as Antòmboka. The result of these explorations was a settled conviction of the unsuitableness of this part of the island to serve as the basis of a mission, and the necessity that some other locality should be selected."*

* "Church Missionary Intelligencer," June, 1867.

Having been isolated from civilised society for eighteen months, it was deemed desirable that the missionaries, before breaking new ground, should be refreshed by a visit to the Mauritius, where they spent four months. They sailed again for Tamatave on the 30th of September, but, as if the winds and the waves were in league against them, they were met by storms, which drove them out to sea for several days. The captain had heard of their previous experiences, and, with a common sailor's prejudice against ministers of religion as passengers, told them most solemnly that if he had known before sailing of their antecedents he would not on any condition have given them a passage.

They reached the port at last, however, and after consulting with their friends at Tamatave, it was determined to take Andèvorànto, an important place at the mouth of the river Iharòka, about seventy miles southward, as the new headquarters of the mission. Here Messrs. Campbell and Maundrell have been labouring since November 1866. They have made extensive journeys southward and inland, and formed Christian congregations at a number of villages in the neighbourhood, preaching the Gospel wherever they have gone. Although the present aspects of their work cannot of course compare with the great movement going on in Imérina, the result of nearly fifty years of Christian influence of one kind or another, yet they have had enough success to encourage the hope that when similar labour has been continued for a length of time similar results will follow. Their work is more strictly missionary and evangelistic than that at the capital, as they are in the midst of a heathen population, with only a few Christians, chiefly Hovas, scattered here and there at the larger places.

In the most recent information as to the work of this

mission, published in July 1868, a most interesting account is given of an exploratory journey to the southward, and to the inland district of the Bétsilèo country. Mr. Campbell received an enthusiastic welcome from the Christian congregations at Fianàrantsòa, the chief town of that neighbourhood. During the week of his stay he was incessantly engaged in conversing with the people, from early morning until evening. Before he was dressed in the morning they were waiting at the gate for admission, and so soon as they got in, the work commenced. In the afternoons he held alternately a Bible and a singing-class, after which he was followed to the marketplace or bazaar by crowds, to whom he preached the Gospel.

Preaching to the heathen wherever he went, he was invariably kindly received and courteously listened to, although his appearance was a terror at first to those who had never seen a European. At one village, the whole population ran away as he approached, as if they had seen a wild beast. The sound, however, of the Malagasy tongue allayed their fears, and as he spoke to them they gathered confidence. One old woman, after peering at him a long time, exclaimed, "Verily, a man!" and another, after looking for a considerable interval, said, "God fallen to the earth!"

The results of this missionary tour convinced Mr. Campbell that the Bétsilèo country was like a field as yet unsown, but open and prepared for the sower to go forth. He concluded his letter by a heart-stirring appeal for more help to enable him and his brother missionary to occupy this wide extent of country, where the people are waiting and longing to hear the words of eternal life.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel commenced a mission at Tamatave in August 1864. Their two missionaries, the Revds. Messrs. Hey and Holding, were

well received, and, within three years, they succeeded in building two churches—one at Tamatave, the other at Foule Point, forty miles further north—and in gathering good congregations at each place, as well as smaller ones at three other villages on the coast. Catechists are labouring at both places, and that most earnestly and consistently. Mr. Holding, in addition to his other labours, made excursions inland amongst the pagans of Bétanimèna and Antsiànaka, preaching God's word in many places where a white man's face had never before been seen.

At Tamatave and Foule Point there were, before Mr. Holding left and Mr. Hey died, daily morning and evening services, and weekly communion. These daily prayers were attended by an average congregation of seventy, about forty-five being communicants. Sunday and day-schools were established, as well as classes for sewing, singing, Bible-reading, and for communicants and catechumens. Mr. Hey had charge of the printing-press, and instructed several lads in the art of printing.*

Without some of the external hindrances to which their brethren of the Church Missionary Society were exposed, the missionaries at Tamatave have had special trials and difficulties to contend with, owing to the repeated attacks of fever induced by the climate of the coast. Mr. Holding was obliged to leave his work for many months from this cause, and Mr. Hey, after a most laborious and devoted service, died at sea, on his return from Mauritius, where he had gone to procure medical assistance for his wife.

Within the last year Mr. Holding has again resumed his labours in conjunction with Mr. Chiswell, who for some time was the sole representative of the society at Tamatave.

This mission being conducted on Anglican principles,

* Quarterly paper of Society for Propagation of the Gospel, May 1868.

the Hova congregation at Tamatave, of which the lieutenant-governor is the pastor, have remained separate, and retained their own worship and organisation.

Society of Friends.

The intense interest which Madagascar has excited in the Christian mind of England, is strikingly shown by the fact that the Society of Friends have been induced to send out some of their number to take a part in the work going on there. In 1867, Mr. Sewell, of Hitchin, one of their most esteemed ministers, and Mr. and Mrs. Street, from America, proceeded to Antanànarivo, where they arrived in the month of June. Their object was not to form a distinct Christian society, but to join as far as possible with the missionaries already there, and especially to take part in school education. For this end they were well furnished with books, maps, and other educational appliances.*

Their services have been most valuable, and highly appreciated both by the Malagasy and the English missionaries. Mr. Sewell has prepared some excellent school-books in the native language, and, together with his companions, has worked zealously for the religious as well as the secular instruction of the people. Strange as it may appear, and opposed to the usual practice of the Society of Friends, Mr. Sewell, seeing the urgent need of the increasing congregations for more teachers, has virtually become the pastor of two of the native churches, in conjunction with one of the London Society's missionaries.

Not long after their arrival, they sent full accounts of

* Before their arrival, members of the Society of Friends had generously contributed to the educational work of the mission, and the central school-house and its fittings were supplied by their liberality.

the religious aspects of the people to their friends in England, fully confirming all that had been previously reported as to the genuine and thorough character of the Christian work done, and the movement then going on. With a large-hearted liberality of spirit, they wrote "that the native services were so simple and scriptural in character that no good Friend need scruple to take part in them." Such words from those who dissent in many respects from the organisation and worship of other religious bodies, are an interesting testimony to the real Christianity of the Malagasy converts, while they illustrate that essential unity existing between all true Christians, however they may differ in externals. Last year (1869) another lady has gone to join their number, and to take part in the very important work of female education.

Norwegian Missionary Society.

Besides those already mentioned, one other Christian body —the National Church of Norway and Sweden—has sent some of its members to take part in the evangelisation of Madagascar.

In the month of August 1866, two missionaries, the Rev. J. Eng and Mr. Nillson, arrived at Antanànarìvo. Their design was, not to commence a mission at the capital, but to stay there for a few months, for the purpose of learning the language, getting acquainted with the people, and consulting with the English missionaries there as to the most eligible place in the neighbourhood of the capital to commence their work.

After accomplishing these objects, and staying at Antanànarìvo for some time, they were visited by their bishop, who was accompanied by the ladies to whom they were to be married. The ceremony took place at the capital, and

they subsequently proceeded to Bétàfo, a large village about thirty miles to the southward, where they are now labouring. Not having had access to any report of the Norwegian Society, or any private letters, we are unable to give further information as to their work.

THE BETEL PALM.

CHAPTER XVII.

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE.

Mixed character of native congregations—Arrangement of village churches in districts—Lay agency—Work of an English missionary—A Sunday in the capital—Sermons—Sunday-schools—Native habits—Singing—Native hymns—Their influence on the people—Sacred music—The Malagasy Bible—Different versions—Bible-classes—A Sunday in the country—Preaching in the villages—Eagerness to receive instruction—Native preachers—Their sermons and quaint illustrations—Reverent habits at worship—Social influence of English mission.

WE have already endeavoured to describe the more prominent features of Christian life and activity among the native churches; the way in which their desire to know God's word has been aroused; and the liberality awakened for the support of religious ordinances amongst themselves, and for extending the blessings of the Gospel to their heathen fellow-countrymen. There are, however, some other particulars which may be interesting, more especially to those who wish to gain a more intimate acquaintance with the circumstances of our native churches, and the influence which Christianity has had upon their social relations.

Our congregations have a rather heterogeneous character, but there are in almost all of them two great classes—viz., those who were Christians during the time of persecution, and those who have joined the ranks of the "praying ones" since the death of Rànavàlona. The first-named are mostly elderly people, often of long-tried Christian character, whose experience of trial and suffering has given their

religious life a depth and reality which is rarely found except under some such circumstances. Many of these are pastors and officers of our churches, and some are amongst our best preachers.

The large majority, however, have been drawn from heathen society since the removal of restrictions on Christianity. To this class belong most of the intelligent and inquiring young men who are so important an element in our congregations, and many of whom are our most acceptable preachers. As we have seen, the Malagasy pay great regard to family relationships, and are prone to move in crowds, so that when one member of a family becomes a Christian he soon induces others of his relatives to join him; and if the head of a household begins to attend religious services, almost all his family and many of his connections will also begin to "pray," as they term it. In all this there is, of course, danger lest religion should be looked upon as a family matter rather than a personal individual concern between the soul and God. A profession of Christianity does not, as a rule, involve much of that family and social persecution which converts from heathenism in India, for example, have often to endure, so that more care has had to be taken in the admission to church-fellowship.

From the rapid extension of Christianity during the last eight years, and the multiplication of congregations in the country districts, the amount of work devolving upon the staff of English missionaries is very great, and considerable use has had to be made of native lay agency. Each of the six or seven missionaries (1869) has a large congregation in the capital, and generally another in the suburbs, while he has from a dozen to a score or more of village churches over which he exercises a general supervision. He aids

these congregations by advice in the choice of their own native pastors and church-officers, and visits them as often as possible to preach, and conduct Bible-classes and other means of instruction. These country churches all feel a kind of connection with the mother-church in the city; and from the latter, preachers go every Sunday to several of these village stations, giving them the benefit of the instruction they have themselves received from the English missionary. A preaching "plan," very similar to that used by the Wesleyan body, is adopted, and this system has been found to work well. In this manner, from the mere necessities of the case, has grown up a kind of primitive episcopacy. Each of these groups of country churches, with its English overseer, is a kind of diocese with its bishop, or (as a Wesleyan Methodist would term it) a circuit with its superintendent. In the present state of intelligence, this has hitherto appeared to be the best plan we could adopt to give to all the benefit of the knowledge and experience of a European ministry; probably for some time to come this plan will be retained. Our object is not to become merely pastors, but to be pioneers, evangelists, helpers, and advisers of the native churches; to train up an educated and faithful native ministry; to provide the people with a Christian literature; and to set on foot those varied agencies which are found amongst ourselves to be necessary for the advance of churches in knowledge and spiritual growth. While most of us have, from education and conviction, been attached to a particular form of church order and discipline, we try and adopt a true and wise eclecticism. We do not desire to impose stereotyped English customs and traditions upon Malagasy converts; but, giving them the Word of God as their guide, we wish to see their religious life develope, according to their special needs, into those forms which will

best help them to advance. In thus acting, we carry out the grand and catholic aim of the London Missionary Society, which was not formed to establish any particular system of church polity, but whose "sole object is to spread the knowledge of Christ amongst heathen and other unenlightened nations."*

A stranger arriving at Antanànarìvo, and spending a Sunday there for the first time, could hardly fail to be impressed with the large amount of outward order and the respect shown for the sacred day, and with the multitudes of people attending public worship. Even during the reign of the heathen queen Ràsohèrina, very little work was done on the Sunday, and the markets, in most cases, were closed.

Soon after daybreak the chief roads are thronged with people repairing to their houses of prayer, all looking cheerful and happy, and dressed in clean white clothes. In most cases the native churches are filled — in some instances they used to be uncomfortably crowded, so that, on entering, it was difficult to pick one's way to a seat through the closely-packed audience. At our old chapel at Ambàtonakànga, a long low dark shed, the light was often almost excluded by the number of dark faces peering in at the open doors and windows. These were heathen, and very frequently people from distant provinces, who had come to the capital for purposes of trade, or to bring tribute and presents to the sovereign. To many of them the Gospel was an entirely new sound; and it was an affecting thought which often occurred to me, that many of these people were then, for *the first time*, hearing the news of salvation—that story which has been a familiar thing with us ever since our earliest childhood. There

* Rule ii.

seemed to be a notion that entering the building was a kind of profession of Christianity, so that those who had not made up their minds to put themselves under instruction generally remained *outside*, listening to the service.

The great majority of the congregation assemble some time before eight o'clock, when the regular morning service begins. Prior to this, singing and prayer are generally conducted in an informal manner, one after another getting up as he feels disposed, giving out a verse or two, and then supplicating the divine blessing upon the services of the day. The arrival of the missionary is the signal for commencing the service, which is conducted much in the same form as in English dissenting chapels. It may, however, surprise an English worshipper to learn that we always have at least *two* sermons, frequently three, and occasionally even *four*, at a service. Of course such sermons are short addresses, but as the acquaintance of our preachers with the Bible has increased, together with the intelligence of the congregations, the character of native preaching has gradually risen; and now, in length and in matter, sermons approach more nearly to what are usually heard in England. It must be remembered, also, that public services are at present the chief means of acquiring religious knowledge. The people have not our abundant literature, our magazines, reviews, and books, the stores of wisdom and piety which we inherit from a long succession of centuries. They have yet but few books, and only one periodical; while the Bible itself is a costly volume, far more expensive to them than ours is to us. Accordingly they come to church for instruction, and, without any sign of weariness, remain for a service of two or three hours.

After morning service, the Sunday-school generally

assembles until noon; many of the elder people also remain; and when I commenced a school of this kind I had more adults than children. It was a delightful thing to commence to read and study with them the stories of the Old Testament. To the great majority, this was a new book; for although the New Testament had been in circulation amongst the Christians, the rest of the Bible was but slightly known. This arose from the small number of copies printed of the first edition of the Scriptures, and their destruction by order of Rànavàlona. Thus the incidents of the Old Testament history were like fairy-tales to them, coming with all the force and beauty of a new revelation. I almost envied them the feeling of freshness with which the stories of Abraham, and Jacob, and Joseph, and Moses were listened to. To some extent their delight did give me this feeling, and their questions opened up ideas and trains of thought which our familiarity with the book would never have suggested.

The second Sunday service is always in the afternoon, from three to five o'clock. We could not well hold it in the evening, on account of the difficulty of walking in the rough roads after dark, and the people's habits of remaining at home after sunset. Besides this, during half the year the rains frequently come on late in the afternoon, so that no one stirs abroad unless from absolute necessity.

The greater portion of our congregations do not sit on raised seats, but, according to the native custom, squat on the thick straw mats which cover the floor. Except at the larger churches, where part of the area is filled with open benches for the men, both sexes prefer their own customs to following European habits in this respect. A few rough forms, round the low platform which served for a pulpit, supplied seats for the preachers and a few

of the leading people. Yet even these would frequently slip down from their elevated seats during the service, and resume their more habitual position on the floor. Following also their own custom of separating the sexes on all public occasions, the men usually occupy one side of the building, and the women the other; and in this, again, we have felt it best to leave them to act according to their own sense of propriety.

The "service of song" occupies a prominent position in Málagasy public worship. The native fondness for music and their love of harmony make the singing no small attraction to the services. Our hymnology is yet in its infancy, and the book hitherto used consists of a small collection of only 168 hymns. These were compiled by the first missionaries and by some of the more intelligent natives. Many of them are translations of English hymns, and some which are familiar to us "as household words" have become equally so to the Malagasy in their own tongue. Amongst these are, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!" "Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched;" "Jesus, and can it ever be;" "Behold what wondrous grace!" and "When I survey the wondrous cross," together with many others. Unfortunately they have no rhyme, which, however, would not be a very difficult thing to attain to; and although the words and syllables are arranged in lines, to be sung to long, common, short, and other metres, they have no proper rhythm. Still, they are loved by the people, and many have become interwoven with the most precious remembrances of the native church. The hymns sung by the martyrs at Fàravòhitra will never be forgotten—the strains which arose from their lips as they ascended the hill; the hymn commencing with the words, "When our hearts are troubled," and each verse

ending "Remember us"—"Tsaròvy izahày;" * and then that song which arose from the flames, speaking of the blessed land, where their hearts and hopes already were.

These hymns, quaint and odd as some of them sound, are yet in many instances touchingly pathetic in their simplicity. Sung as they have been in the forest, the cave, and the rice-pit, in the darkness of the prison, and in the hour of a cruel death, it is not wonderful that they are endeared to the Christian heart of Madagascar, and have in Imèrina become almost the national songs of the people! As an example of the simple beauty which many of the native hymns possess, even under the guise of a translation, I give below the original Malagasy, and an almost literal rendering into English of one of the Sunday morning hymns:—

ANDRO ALAHADY.

1. Mandrenesa Zanahary,
   Ny saotr' atao ny olonao;
   Aok' ho sitrakao ny feony
   Mivavaka, ka mihira.

2. Tianay ny andro sabata,
   'Zay anay ety an-tany;
   Fa ny tsara ao an-danitra
   Izan no antenain 'indrindra.

3. Tsy hahita ny mahory
   F' afa-tsasatra, afa-doza,
   Afak' ota, afa-jaly,
   Tsy hisy alahelo 'ntsony.

4. Tsy handrahona ny andro,
   Alina tsy hisy 'ntsotry;
   Andro mahafinaritra,
   Haharitra mandrakizay.

SUNDAY.

1. Give ear, O Creator,
   To the thanks of Thy people;
   Let their voices please Thee,
   In prayer and in praise.

2. We love the Sabbath day,
   Ours here upon earth;
   But that good day in heaven
   Is our hope above all.

3. Not seen will be trouble,
   Free from sin, free from pain,
   From fatigue and from evil,
   We shall sorrow no more.

4. Cloudless the day,
   The night shall be gone;
   Day of rejoicing
   For ever enduring.

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* The last verse may be rendered—

And when death itself
Approaches us nigh,
And spent is our strength,
Attend to our cry,

5. Sabat' tsar' indrindr' izany,
Endra ka hiseho faingana!
Sasatr' isikia ran aty;
Sambatr' isikia rah' any!

5. That best of all Sabbaths,
O let it soon dawn!
While here we are weary,
How blest when we're there!

In the early part of 1869, the late Rev. R. G. Hartley edited a new edition of the hymn-book, printed by the Religious Tract Society, to which he and other members of the mission added about a dozen new hymns, arranged in the proper rhythm for the various metres.*

The music to which the hymns are sung may be divided into three classes. The first of these are oldfashioned tunes which were popular in England fifty years ago—such as "Cookham," "Knaresboro'," "Mariners," etc. These were taught by the early missionaries, and many of them are sung about three times slower than the time we are accustomed to, so that at first it was difficult to recognise them at all. This slow measure was, I doubt not, the time in which they were sung by the earliest religious teachers, and has been faithfully retained by tradition during thirty or forty years.

The second class of tunes are of native composition, and have more the character of a piece of music than a hymn-tune. They are sung to one hymn only, with a different air to each verse. Some of these pieces are strikingly beautiful and appropriate, but they are too elaborate for congregational worship; and in some cases the leading melodies are evidently taken from European military airs, songs, and even dance-music, and are thus far from suitable to the grave character of a good hymn-tune. The people are very fond of many of these pieces, but their use has

* In addition to the hymn-book, large editions of the "Pilgrim's Progress," James's "Anxious Inquirer," a work on the Resurrection, and several tracts, have been printed by the Religious Tract Society for the use of the Malagasy missionaries and converts.

caused the serious evil of leaving the singing too much to a choir, instead of the congregation as a whole joining in the worship. We have therefore taken considerable pains to teach a number of our best modern tunes; and in the city congregations, the former objectionable style of music is now being superseded by one more appropriate to divine worship. A good harmonium in all the churches would be a valuable aid in teaching and keeping up a knowledge of good sacred music; in two or three of them, instruments have already been placed.

As already mentioned, the first English missionaries completed an edition of the entire Bible in the native language before they were obliged to leave the island. Of this edition not more than a dozen copies are known to be in existence; so diligently were they sought out and destroyed by the queen's orders, that only these few remain. Probably many are now mouldering away in the ground, where they were often buried for a time, to conceal them from the officers of the government. Most of those which have been preserved bear the marks of the rough usage to which they were subjected in those troublous times. Bound in rough untanned hide, stained and discoloured, almost worn away in some parts with use, they are interesting memorials of the time when the Word of God was precious, when there was no open vision, and when the very possession of the Book of Life was a perilous thing.

This first edition, as might be expected, is far from being perfect or satisfactory as a translation; yet it is wonderful that it was made so accurate as it is, considering the short time some of its translators had been acquainted with Malagasy and with English—for several books were partly done by some of the more intelligent and educated natives. It follows English idiom too much to be a very accurate

representation of the original to the native mind. A large number of this version of the New Testament were in circulation, and also separate books, gospels and epistles, and even single leaves, which could be carried with security hidden in the folds of the lamba.

After Mr. Griffiths's return to England, he was engaged for some time in revising this translation. A new edition of the Testament was published by the Bible Society in 1855, but the complete Bible was not finished until 1866, when we received the whole volume, bound in one book and in parts. For some days after the arrival of the cases containing this edition, the printing-office yard was almost besieged by the people, eager to buy the book, costly though it was, compared with our cheap English Bible. This second version is, however, far from perfect; too much has been made of a theory of what the language would be, were certain rules rigorously adhered to, and the actual exceptions to these rules have not been sufficiently allowed for. Some words have been coined, which, although formed strictly according to analogy from Malagasy roots, are not recognised by the people, and really require translating, As this edition is already, or soon will be, exhausted, the work of a complete revision, almost a re-translation, has been commenced; so it is to be hoped that, with the accumulated experience of the past, this third version will faithfully reflect the original sacred text in the native tongue.

Besides public worship on Sundays and weekdays, large use has been made of Bible-classes for giving religious instruction. For a long time it is difficult for an Englishman, who has "from a child known the holy Scriptures," to realise that most of the people have only lately heard at all about religious truth. We are so familiar with all the

leading doctrines and facts of Revelation, that we are apt to take for granted that they are equally so to our hearers, and consequently much of what is said often remains unintelligible to them. But at these conversational meetings difficulties can be removed; we learn how the people think, and how truth presents itself to their minds; and can thus see how to adapt our preaching to their requirements.

Many classes are held with young men, particularly for the benefit of those who preach, and different books of Scripture are systematically studied. Within the last few months two of the missionaries have commenced classes, which it is hoped will develope into a theological academy for training native pastors and preachers in dogmatic theology, Scripture exegesis, preaching, church history, etc. In this way, and in giving daily instruction at the schools, preparing for public services, taking part in translations, and forming a Christian literature, a missionary in Madagascar finds abundance of work; while his wife, with her women's and girls' classes, renders him valuable help in influencing the female population.

Perhaps a sketch of a Sunday in the country may give a yet more vivid idea of our work, and of the desire shown by the people to receive instruction. As a lay member of the Ambàtonakànga, church I was put on the preaching plan, and used to take my turn in visiting the village stations. Leaving home soon after sunrise, I generally took a double set of bearers; or rather they took me, and we proceeded northwards over the main road and nearly level country in the direction of Ambòhimànga. Appearing at first as a dark-blue hill in the far distance, it gradually becomes more and more distinct as we diminish our distance mile after mile, until, after about two hours' journey, we

approach the foot of the lofty wooded heights. Skirting the eastern extremity of the city, we presently come to a number of houses forming a suburb on the plain, outside the fosses which mark the boundary of the sacred town. Passing the massive stone gateway guarded by soldiers, we give our name to the officer on duty, and presently arriving, soon after eight o'clock, at the neat little chapel, we find the congregation assembled, waiting for the English missionary. Although then prohibited from entering the town itself, there was no restriction, either upon Christianity or foreigners, outside its boundary.

As soon as I enter, the native pastor commences the service and preaches; then I take the desk, conduct the worship, and preach also, then dismissing the people with the benediction. But they do not seem disposed to go, and we therefore hold a Bible-class, at which almost all the congregation remain. In the course of this, difficult passages are brought for explanation, knotty points proposed for solution, and many interesting ideas are often suggested by their inquiries. Meanwhile, the people who live near the chapel have been preparing food for their visitor; and as soon as we finish our class, they bring a fowl and some rice and fruit into the chapel for my dinner. The people turn out of the building while I discuss these, talking at the same time with some of the preachers. Directly I have finished my meal, they all come in again, for a visit from their European friends is only an occasional event, and every moment must be utilised by gaining instruction in one form or another. Sometimes I teach the singers a new tune, carefully drilling them in each part, and, with no small expenditure of breath, repeating it until they have quite mastered it. Then sermons and texts are discussed, how to divide the subject properly, etc., outlines

of discourses are submitted for criticism, and suggestions asked. Then we commence the afternoon service: I preach again, and between two and three o'clock take my leave, with the hearty farewells and thanks and blessings of the people.

Turning homewards, we diverge a mile or so from the main road to visit another village, Lazaina, where they have already perhaps had a sermon or two; here I preach again, and then set off home, arriving at Antanànarìvo about sunset—heartily tired, but yet glad and thankful to have been able in any way to help the people, who often seemed hungering and thirsting for God's truth. Happy Sundays indeed were those! It is difficult to imagine more cheering work than this which we have now to do. And so it is in a great measure with all the other stations. All our brethren could narrate similar experiences with regard to their own districts.

A word or two about Malagasy preachers must conclude these reminiscences. I have frequently been amused, and yet delighted, with the quaint illustrations which our native friends often use. Their interpretation of Scripture sometimes provokes a smile, and yet their evident desire to enforce the truth upon the hearts of their hearers makes one forget their misapprehension of some portions of the Bible. I was particularly struck with a sermon by a good earnest man, one of our preachers at Àndohàlo. A short outline of this may not be without interest. He was preaching from the text in the Epistle of St. James, chap. v. ver. 14, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." In his introduction he said: "There are three diseases which I know of, that frequently cause death, and these are—smallpox, whooping-

cough, and *sin*.* I know the first is fatal, *because* I have heard old men say that when it first appeared in the country those who were attacked by it were *buried alive* (*!*). But now, with regard to remedies, if neither you nor your children have yet had smallpox, go as quickly as possible to the doctor and get vaccinated. As for whooping-cough, the best way to act is to buy some flannel and make warm

RATSILAINGIA, NATIVE PREACHER.

jackets for your children. But in the case of *sin*, that most terrible of all diseases, there is but one medicine for that: you must go to Jesus Christ, the only physician of souls."

* Smallpox was, until the introduction of vaccination, a terrible scourge to the people, and whooping-cough had lately been very fatal amongst children.

With great earnestness he enlarged on the power of sin, and the efficacy of belief in Christ to save from it.

Then, with regard to the words, "Call for the elders of the church," he remarked: "Some people are always grumbling: when they are unwell they say, 'No one cares about me, nobody comes to visit me; the pastor and the deacons would let me die for anything they care about it.' But how is it likely they should know you are ill unless you send them word? Do you suppose the elders of the church are *prophets*, to know when people are ill and when they are well, by inspiration? What did Cornelius do when he wanted the Apostle Peter to come and instruct him? He did not rest content with *wishing*; he *sent* men to Joppa, to tell the apostle his needs and his desires. And so you, brethren, if you want help and consolation, don't complain in the way so many do, but *call for* the elders of the church."

"And then, 'Anointing with oil'—what are we to understand by this? It seems to me that this has some reference to medicine, for we read that when the good Samaritan saw the poor man wounded by the roadside, he went and bound up his wounds, pouring in *oil* and wine. So my idea of the meaning is, that when you go to see a sick person, take a little physic in your pocket for him. Some, however, may perhaps say, 'We are too poor to buy medicine for other people;' but still, you can do something for them without money—you can help to carry them down to the doctor at the hospital." And thus, in spite of his curious exegesis, this good man managed to bring home very important truth with a force and directness of application which better-instructed preachers often fail to attain.

One of my brethren heard the following anecdote related by a native preacher, in illustration of the insufficiency of

earthly good to satisfy the soul. He said: "There was a certain officer, a rich man, in a distant part of the country, who, when dying, ordered his friends to observe the following ceremonies, at the time when, according to native custom, the corpse should be exposed to the view of friends and relatives before burial. They were to fill the coffin with money, to surround it with soldiers, to place all his family around, and to stretch out his opened hand. All this was done, and while some wondered, others said, 'See the wisdom of this man; he wishes to show us that all his money cannot purchase life, his soldiers cannot protect him from death, his relatives weeping around cannot prolong his existence; he stretches out his hand and asks for *other things* now.'"

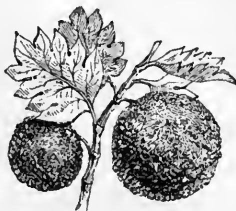
Many of our native brethren are impressive and ready speakers, and their earnestness, Christian experience, and knowledge of the Scriptures, make them listened to with delight, so that they are a great power for good.

I was, from the first, surprised by the reverent manner in which public worship is conducted—especially by the outward respect shown during prayer. Almost everyone has his face covered with the folds of the lamba, and even young children seem instinctively to know that prayer is a solemn act, and often lie at full length on the ground perfectly still, with their little heads covered by their dress.

When the Scriptures are read, a large number follow with their Testaments, and when any passage is cited in the sermon, it is referred to, in confirmation of the preacher's words. And so with regard to the administration of the sacraments; although the elements are often merely a cake of rice and a weak wine made from fruit, yet there is a genuine feeling of reverence for the ordinance. Although divested of any outward show, often without

chalice or paten or flagon, and other accompaniments of our celebration of the communion, there is a homage of the heart, as far removed from irreverence on the one hand as it is from superstition on the other.

But I must conclude these sketches, only adding, that the presence of a little Christian community of English people in the capital is perhaps not one of the least of the indirect influences for good upon the Malagasy. A pure and affectionate family life, such as they see in our mission households, and the example and instruction of Christian ladies, have contributed very much to elevate the character of native society, to give a higher notion of the marriage tie, and to lead the people to train their children in the fear of God. These are results which a celibate ministry could not have accomplished. The combined influence of faithful teaching and holy living, both in the former and the present missionaries, whether in the relation of pastor, husband, and father, has, under God, revolutionised the formerly heathen society of the capital, and produced a change which we trust will in due time extend over the whole island, and make its various tribes a united, enlightened, civilised, and Christian people.



BREADFRUIT.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MEMORIAL CHURCH BUILDING.

Origin of scheme—Rev. W. Ellis secures sites—Appeal for help from English Christians—Hearty response—Author's mission as architect—Description of the four sites: Ampàmarìnana, Ambòhipòtsy, Fàravòhitra, and Ambàtonakànga—First church commenced at Ambàtonakànga—Description of the building—Difficulties and hindrances—Fewness of workmen—Their want of skill—Annoying methods of working—Constant stoppages from national customs, and demands of government—Military service—Scarcity of materials—Building the spire—The top-stone laid—Appearance of the church—Exterior and interior—Church at Ambòhipòtsy—Superior character of work—Return to England—Change in laws as to stone buildings—Objections to the building of Memorial Churches—Benefits arising from their construction.

THE opening chapters of this book contained much of a personal nature. In this concluding one, I must again venture to become egotistic, and lay aside the indefinite *we.* I do so for the purpose of adding a few words about my special mission, but for which the preceding pages would in all probability never have been written. I am not without hope that this book will come into the hands of some who contributed to the erection of the Memorial Churches at Antanànarìvo, and who may therefore feel some interest in knowing how their money was expended, and in hearing of some of those difficulties which have delayed for so long the full realisation of the design.

The idea of erecting these memorial buildings originated with the Rev. William Ellis, whose name has been so largely associated with the later religious history of the country. Before his arrival at the capital in 1862, he wrote to the king, Radàma II., requesting that the places

where the chief martyrdoms took place might be reserved as sites for Christian churches, which should not only be consecrated to "the worship and service of that blessed God and Saviour for whom they (the martyrs) died, but should serve also to perpetuate through future times the memory of their constancy and faith." In accordance with this request, orders were immediately given that the pieces of land should be reserved for that special purpose; and on Mr. Ellis's arrival, he was assured by the king that the ground should be used for nothing else, and should be given up when required. Thus encouraged, Mr. Ellis wrote a stirring appeal to English Christians for aid in the matter; pointing out that one of the most pressing wants of the native churches at that time was places for public worship, and that, from the fines, imprisonment, and losses sustained by the people during the persecution, they were unable to do much themselves to erect substantial buildings. This letter contained graphic descriptions of the four principal sites, and estimated the cost of four appropriate churches at 10,000*l.* The writer deemed "that these buildings should be of stone—not ornamented or showy, but plain, solid, lasting fabrics, corresponding in their style and character with the purpose for which they are raised, and capable of containing eight hundred or a thousand persons each." Mr. Ellis concluded by asking, "Will England give to Madagascar these Memorial Churches, and thus associate the conflicts and triumphs of the infant church with the remembrance of the source from which, through Divine mercy, Madagascar received the blessings of salvation, and thus perpetuate the feelings of sympathy and love which bind the Christians of Madagascar to their brethren in England?"

This proposal met with a warm and prompt response,

both in England and the colonies. Madagascar and its people were then exciting an intense interest in the Christian heart of our own country. Within a few weeks from the publication of Mr. Ellis's letter, half the estimated sum was raised; and in a year or two, considerably more than the amount asked for was subscribed. In June, 1863, I was invited by the directors to go out to Madagascar as architect of the churches. Feeling it an honour to engage in such an undertaking, and hoping also to do something to aid in the spiritual work of the mission, I decided to accept their offer; and leaving England in August, I reached the capital of Madagascar on the 16th of October.

Two or three days after my arrival, I accompanied Mr. Ellis in a ride through the city, to inspect the sites upon which we were to build, and was greatly impressed by their commanding positions, and the prominence that churches erected upon them could not fail to have.

Ampàmarìnana was the first spot we visited. This place was a small open area on the summit of the rock from which criminals were hurled. It is quite in the heart of the city, distant about a hundred yards or so west of the great palace, and almost overshadowed by its vast bulk. This Tarpeian Rock of Madagascar was the scene of the death of fourteen Christians in the terrible persecution of 1849. From the spot is a grand and extensive view of the city and the country westwards. A precipice about 150 feet in height falls sheer down from the little platform, while the plain is about 500 feet below.

From this place we rode to the southern extremity of the hill—to Ambòhipòtsy. The exact spot where Rasàlama, the first martyr, died is a shallow fosse, part of the ancient defences, a little below the extreme end of the ridge, to the south. The site proposed for erecting the church was

the level platform within a few yards of the place; almost the highest point in the city, with an uninterrupted prospect for many miles, east, south, and west; bounded only by the Ankàratra chain of mountains, sixty or seventy miles to the south-west. On every side except the north, the hill slopes steeply downwards, its declivities forming an inexhaustible quarry of excellent stone. It was a fair and lovely scene which met the last earthly gaze of those faithful confessors for Christ who knelt here to receive the spear of the executioner; the fertile plain with cultivated fields, watered by the Ikiòpa, which can be traced for many a mile to the north-west; numbers of peaceful villages; line after line of the bright red hills, with the grey rocks piercing through them at every high point; and the blue line of mountains in the far distance. But their hopes were fixed upon the better land, where the river of the water of life is in the midst of the garden of God, and and where He reigns whose righteousness was faintly shadowed by those great mountains.

After inspecting the site at Ambàtonakànga, whose excellent situation in a thickly-populated neighbourhood has already been described (page 138), we mounted the northern extremity of the hill to Fàravòhitra, where the burning of the four nobles took place in 1849. Somewhat similar in position to Ambòhipòtsy, but at a less elevation, this site commands the view to the northward, including many of the sacred ancient towns, and the old capital, Ambòhimànga. There, on its rocky summit, twelve miles distant, was the tomb of Rànavàlona, who, a little more than thirty years before, took the first steps towards the suppression of Christianity, by banishing some of the missionaries from the country. What a history was compressed within those few years! What a struggle between "the prince of this

world" and God's truth! and what a final triumph! Since 1849, the space had been partly built upon, and divided from the open hillside by a low wall. Close to this the spot was pointed out where the martyrs' stake was fixed. Mr. Cameron, in writing on the 30th of July, 1867, said: "It will be interesting to the directors to know that in digging out the ground for the foundation (of the Memorial Church) we crossed the very spot where the woman was burnt who gave birth to a child in the flames. Near the spot indicated, we dug up, within the space of a yard or two, undoubted memorials of that affecting scene, consisting of charcoal and ashes, known by the natives as belonging to the dried shrub which was heaped around the martyrs; and one discovered, among the ashes, part of a human bone belonging to the shoulder, which the natives also considered as part of her remains. Without any special intention on our part, the first stone of the children's memorial church was laid exactly under this spot, at the south-west angle of the church."

Within a few days after these visits, I commenced operations by making accurate ground-plans of two of the sites. After some discussion, it was decided that the first church should be commenced at Ambàtonakànga, where preparations for building had already been made, by quarrying and squaring a large number of stones. It was no easy matter to get a base-line for the survey of the spot. The ground was so rough and irregular, and so covered with boulders of hard blue rock, some of them twenty to thirty feet in height, that the view was interrupted in every direction. Although only about ten or twelve feet below the site at the south-east corner, the roads to the east and south, which formed two of the boundaries of our ground, sloped rapidly downwards in

each direction, so that it was more than forty feet above the roadway at the northern extremity.

We had ample space for a large church, and also for school-buildings and missionary's house; but to get room for them, an immense quantity of earth had to be levelled and removed, thousands of blasts made, and several hundred tons of stone broken up. Not only was the ground covered with rock, but the basalt cropped up to the surface in many places, and gave me some trouble to secure a foundation which should settle regularly and evenly. Fortunately, the soil was a hard compact gravelly sand, appearing in sections very like granite, but without its cementing element. We found on the site a quantity of hard white stone, resembling the finer qualities of the Yorkshire stone called Bramley Fall; and for some months we derived our whole supply of material from this source.

After carefully considering the needs of the people, the skill of the workmen, the quality of the available material, and the requirements of climate, I prepared the designs for the first church. This was proposed to be built entirely of dressed stone, in 12-inch courses, within and without; 82 feet by 46 feet inside in the clear, with apse, vestries, and a tower and spire at the south-east angle of the main front. This area, together with a large gallery over the vestibule, and extending into the first bay of the church, would, I estimated, give ample accommodation for a thousand people.

The style I adopted was a very plain adaptation of Norman, depending for effect rather upon a judicious arrangement of material than on elaborate detail. The latter, indeed, had it been desirable, was inadmissible, from the unskilled character of the labour at my disposal, and the intractable nature of the stone. All mouldings bad to be bold and simple in section. The two doorways, and

the windows in the principal front, were the only portions where I attempted anything beyond the simplest arrangement. The former were shafted, and the arches ornamented with the chevron, so characteristic of the style. The roof was pretty steep in pitch, and projected over the walls in deep eaves. The heavy rains of the wet season made such a form an imperative necessity; and I never afterwards felt a doubt that on this account, as well from the rude workmanship admissible in the simple Gothic styles, as compared with Greek or Italian, my judgment was correct in adopting the architectural details of Northern Europe instead of those of the South.

The interior was planned to consist of a nave divided from the aisles by wooden columns, which supported the framing of the roof. The great weight of the tiles we should have to use as a covering made it desirable to have some central supports, instead of letting the whole thrust come upon the side-walls. Eventually this arrangement was altered, and stone columns and arches were substituted for the timber framework, so that the interior had much of the appearance of a European church, but with apse instead of chancel. The central portion of the roof was hammer-beam in construction, and ceiled above the main timbers. A ventilating chamber was thus provided, and the requirements of the climate were further satisfied by filling every alternate window with wooden louvring instead of glass, so that a current of air might always be passing through the church.

Such was the design, but the carrying of it out in veritable stone and timber was a different matter altogether; and for many months and, as it proved, even years, I was obliged to exercise patience and hope, until sometimes I despaired of ever seeing the building completed.

I had some advantages, it is true. We had, or seemed to have at first, an abundant supply of stone; and I was not hampered, as many architects are, by want of money to carry on the work; but, on the other hand, I was ignorant of the language, of the people, and of their method of working. It was difficult to gain any precise information as to the best means of procuring timber, lime, tiles, &c. But the greatest hindrance was the limited number of workmen whose services were worth having, and still more, the impossibility of retaining these for long together. Stonemasonry was not an entirely new thing to the Malagasy. Tombs and gateways had already been constructed, as well as two or three stone houses for the sovereign. But a large building, which required careful scientific work, was a new thing to them; and, in the case of the majority of workmen, it was necessary to commence with the A B C of the art, and to teach them, first how to dress stone to a true face, and then how to square it accurately. The use of the level and plumb-bob and cord was a mystery which even the most intelligent but slowly apprehended, and it was necessary for me to inspect minutely every course, and almost every stone. Unless this was done, the third or fourth course would frequently be found to overlap the lower ones by two or three inches.

Dull, however, as these workmen seemed to be in some matters, in others they could be as sharp as any European mason; and to save a little trouble they would "scamp" the work, and put in rubbishy material with an ingenuity that only constant inspection could detect. This made it necessary for me to spend a great deal of time on the ground, and carefully superintend every part of the work, setting out every detail, and testing every stone, both when dressed and laid. Everything, except plain walling,

I had to mark out, and notwithstanding every precaution, I was often mortified to find a good block wasted through the stupidity of my unpractised masons.

It was the same with labourers and with carpenters; centering, scaffolding, fencing, and earthwork—all had to be carefully marked out for them. Instead of being merely the architect, I also found myself contractor, builder, clerk of works, and foreman.

I was of course prepared for much of this; but constant interruptions arose from the difficulty of retaining the services of my workmen, such as they were. From the first, I had but from twenty to thirty men at most, at any one time, and these held certain traditions of working, by which they abided as strictly as any trades-unionist in England follows the instructions of his committee. For instance, every man quarried his own blocks, dressed them, and then built them into the walls; and, for a long time, I could not get a system of division of labour. Another of their rules was, that if a workman had begun on any part of the building, no one else would touch that portion of the walling, but seemed to regard it as the vested right of the one who commenced. He might go away on other work for weeks, but it mattered not—it must be left for him to complete at his convenience. Through this cause some portions have occasionally been left unfinished for months, leaving an ugly gap in the walling; and as the fellows knew I could not get other help, they set me at defiance. I could not call in another body of men, as they were not to be had; I was obliged to wait until the idlers chose to resume their work. Much as the Malagasy love money, they yet love to take their time in earning it; and so the work frequently stood still, and I could not push it forward either for love *or* money.

Great annoyance was also occasioned by the constant stoppages which occurred from other causes. One of these was the general abundance of food and cheapness of living. No one was obliged to work for long together at any occupation; as soon, therefore, as a man had gained a few dollars, he would go off for a time, and attend to his rice-fields, his planting or building, or repairing his house and his family tomb. Indeed, it was necessary for everyone to attend to his rice-sowing, transplanting, and harvest operations, preparing his ground, and attending to his fences and watercourses. Other hindrances arose from national customs and extensive family relationships, and the claims which these are supposed to have upon everyone. A marriage, a birth, or the funeral of any relative or connection or friend, was a sufficient excuse for absence, more or less prolonged, from work—until I sometimes began to think that everybody in Antanànarìvo was related to everyone else living there. Besides these hindrances, the claims of the government service and of the chief officers, and indeed, to some extent, of all superiors in rank, were continual. I had hardly fairly commenced the church before both the prime minister and the commander-in-chief began to erect large dwelling-houses. I went down to the work one morning, and found every man away; all had been taken by the great officers, including my foreman, whose services I did not regain for months. During the greater part of the time also, the queen was building a new palace, and all the skilled artisans in the country were obliged to attend in the *ròva*, although perhaps not a tenth part of them were actually at work altogether; and it was at some risk to themselves that either masons or carpenters dared be seen working for their own benefit at our building.

The military system of the country also made frequent

claims upon the time of our workmen, most of whom were soldiers or members of the militia force. During the summer of 1866, when much apprehension was felt at the aspect of France, there was constant drilling and marching for several weeks. Hardly a stone was laid at the church for nearly two months; indeed, labour of every kind was almost suspended for that period.

In addition to all this, lime was scarce, being a government monopoly, and brought from a distance. When we obtained any, it was frequently adulterated with a white clay, which made it perfect rubbish. Timber of good size was difficult to procure, and had to be dragged for many miles from the forests, so that it was often more expensive than it would have been in England. We fortunately purchased a large house, which supplied us with our main roof-timbers, and with well-seasoned wood for doors, windows, and other joiner-work. This was chiefly a hard red wood, resembling mahogany or rosewood.

For a year I had but little European assistance, for a young Scotchman, who had come from the Cape to superintend the carpentry, was obliged to leave very soon, through repeated attacks of Malagasy fever. After that period, Mr. Cameron took charge of the roofing and tiling of the church. From Mr. Ellis I received much valuable help for several weeks, in translating for me, and assisting me in procuring timber and lime.

It will be seen from the foregoing, that I had much need of patience during the erection of the first church, which occupied three years. The first stone was laid on the 19th of January, 1864, by the prime minister, Rainivòninàhitriniòny, in the presence of several of the leading members of the government and a number of the native Christians Slowly, month after month, the walls rose; we raised the

first principal of the roof early in March 1866, and commenced the spire in December 1865. It was a very modest elevation—50 feet of tower, and a plain broach spire of 30 feet more—but it was an astonishing structure to the Malagasy. Especially on the market-days, when hundreds of people passed the building, it was an object of gaping wonder to the crowds from the villages and distant parts of the country. Very various and amusing were the conjectures as to the purpose to which the tower was to be applied. Some were confident that the belfry-windows were embrasures for cannon, and that we English were cunning fellows, who were preparing a strong place of security against any time of disturbance. Others imagined some mysterious scheme for gaining political power was concealed in the massive stone walls; and others again, in utter disbelief that it would ever be completed, said, "When that is finished, I will pray"—*i. e.* become a Christian.

I dared not tell my workmen how high I was really going; I should have frightened them too much. As it was, it was not without some difficulty that I induced them to proceed; and had I not had the same men from the beginning, and so gradually accustomed them to the increasing height, they would never have ventured up to the awful elevation of seventy or eighty feet. More than once, their wives and children came to me, begging that I would give their husbands and fathers some other work, and not risk their lives by sending them up to the skies in the way I was doing. I calmed their fears, partly by a little coaxing, and partly by representing how much more their relatives were earning through their boldness, and assuring them that I would take every precaution for their safety. At one time, I almost thought I should have to complete the spire myself, with the help of my good foreman and

two or three labourers (slaves) who had assisted to erect the scaffolding, and had at length become very fearless. That scaffolding, by the way, was a curious piece of construction. It was carried on strong balks of timber projecting from the belfry-windows. In an English town we should certainly have been summoned by a district surveyor of works; yet it stood securely, and was both put up and taken down without the smallest mishap.

Slow as our progress was, we at last approached the highest point; and it was with a feeling of deep thankfulness that, on the 31st of August, 1866, I ascended the scaffolding, together with my friend the Rev. George Cousins, the pastor of the church, and then laid the cap-stone of the spire, and fixed the finial cross in its place. Our good foreman, Rainimahàzo, then said, " Shall we not thank God ?" Mr. Cousins accordingly, in a few words, expressed our gratitude that we had been permitted to see our undertaking so far brought to completion, and our deep thankfulness that no accident had befallen any one of the workmen, but that both life and limb had been preserved; so that if the top-stone was not exactly "brought forth with shouting," it was at least laid with heartfelt thanksgiving. It was market-day, and numbers of people were passing below, and wondering what we were doing up at that lofty height. I shall not soon forget that little group at the top of the spire, and our united prayer and praise. I did indeed feel that a good Providence had been watching over us; and perhaps the more so, because during the erection of the queen's palace, and but a few months previously, two men had been killed by falls from the scaffolding, while not the slightest injury had been experienced by our workmen. Had it unhappily been otherwise, the church would probably never have been completed in its entirety,

and the government would most likely have interfered to prevent our risking the lives of its subjects.

After a few more months of work, the building gradually approached completion, and on the 22nd of January, 1867, was publicly dedicated to the worship of God by a day of hearty and joyous services.*

Considering the difficulties I had to contend with, the changes of internal arrangement during the progress of the building, and especially the experimental character of this first stone church in such a country, I was not disappointed in its general effect, either within or without—although there were many separate points I would have arranged differently could the church have been designed afresh. The funds at my disposal kept me to very modest proportions as regards height; but for this, both the main building and the spire would have been improved by a little greater elevation. Still, the church formed a prominent addition to the city, and its clock in the tower was the first public timekeeper seen in Madagascar. The interior was plain and simple, with its circular columns and round arches; its apse with a raised platform and lectern, below and in front of which were the communion-table and font. Over the great arch I painted in large letters the text, "My house shall be called the house of prayer for all people," in Malagasy. Looking from the preaching-desk towards the entrance vestibule, we see the great gallery with triplet window over the main doorway. These lights are filled with simple diapered glass, the centre one having the sacred monogram, I.H.S., and the side-windows the Alpha and Omega, on coloured grounds. Part only of the area was filled with open benches, many of the men and all the women preferring the native fashion of sitting on the

* See page 137.

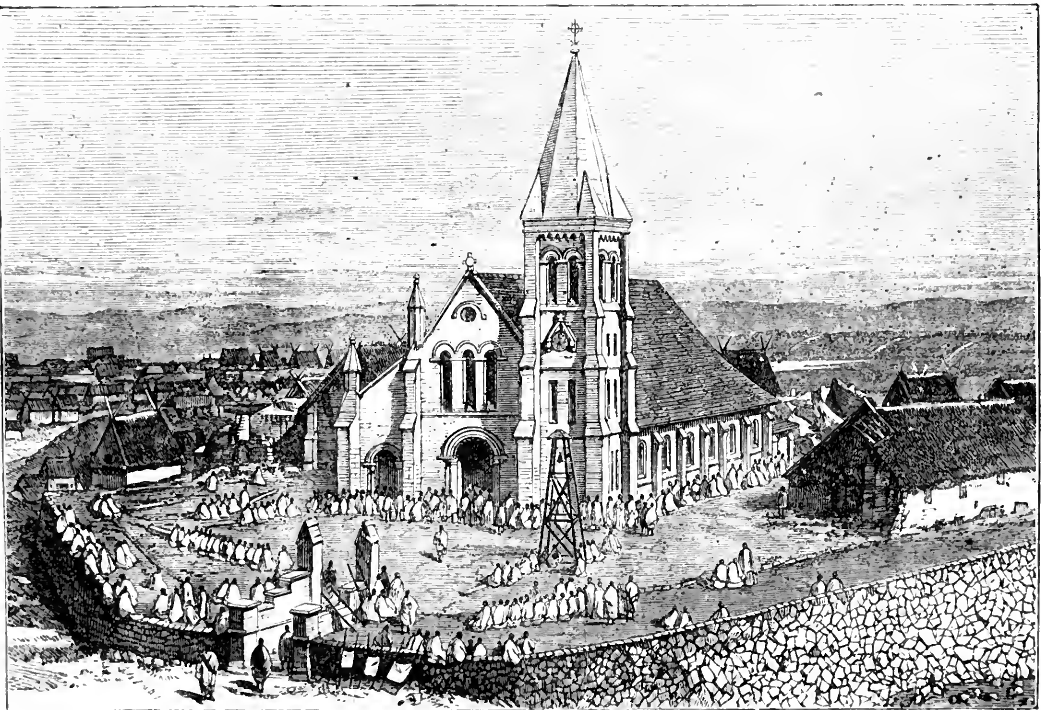
floor on the straw mats. For the women we fixed low standards, similar to the bench-ends, and carrying a strong rail, so that when sitting on cushions on the floor they had a support for the back.

And so, after many weary months of work and of waiting, I saw my first church completed; feeling an interest in almost every stone in its walls, and an affection for the whole building, which can perhaps only be awakened by an object for which we have spent thought and care and constant labour for a long-continued period.

In addition to the work in the church itself, we were obliged to spend a considerable amount of money on the ground, and our huge boulders of rock came in very serviceably to build massive retaining-walls on the eastern and southern sides. These required a good deal of care and attention, for the ultimate security of the building depended very much upon their stability.

For more than a year before the completion of the Ambàtonakànga church, we were also at work upon the second building at Ambòhipòtsy. During the first fifteen or sixteen months at the first church, it was useless to divide our small force of workmen by attempting to carry on another structure; but as the stonework of the main building approached completion, it became desirable to commence a second church, so as not to lose the masons whom I had trained to understand our method of working. In July, 1865, I was joined by Mr. W. Pool, who had been sent by the directors to assist me as builder or clerk of works. We commenced preparations for the second church in September, and laid the first stone early in October.

In designing the Ambòhipòtsy church, I allowed myself greater freedom than I had ventured upon in my first building. It was planned to consist of nave and aisles,



OPENING OF AMBATONAKÀNGA MEMORIAL CHURCH.

transepts and apse, and tower and spire, about ten feet higher than the one at Ambàtonakànga. Being in such a prominent position, and quite a landmark for an immense distance all round the capital, it was desirable that this church should have a monumental character; and as I had now seen that the masons were capable, with careful supervision, of executing more advanced work in stone, I ventured to design it in a simple Early-English style of Gothic, only slightly modified to suit some of the requirements of the climate. The interior carpenter's and joiner's work was more ornamental in character; and as I had now the great advantage of Mr. Pool's many years' practical experience and superintendence, I felt satisfied that all I designed might be accomplished.

The work came out well, and we obtained a better finish both in masonry and carpenter's work than at the first church. We had the advantage of having an unlimited supply of excellent stone close at hand, and available in larger blocks than we could procure at Ambàtonakànga, where for several months we had to obtain all our material from a distance. But although I saw the main walls finished, and the tower completed up to the base of the spire, I was unable to stay until the completion of the building. The term for which I had gone out to Madagascar was already exceeded by several months, and for many reasons I was anxious to return to England. Circumstances, which cannot be detailed here, made it impossible for us to commence work at either of the other memorial sites. So, after completing the designs and necessary working drawings for the Fàravòhitra church, and making preliminary sketches for that at Ampàmarinana, I left Antanànarivo on the 16th of May, 1867.

It was with regret that I wished good-bye to my friends,

both English and Malagasy. The kindly-expressed wishes of very many that I would return to labour amongst them, and the esteem and affection of numbers of them, made me hope that I should at some future day see again the "city of a thousand towns," and come back to help forward, in a more direct way, their spiritual and social advancement. Besides my own special work, I did what I could in designing and superintending other buildings for religious worship and for instruction, both in the town and the country; and had taken part in school-work and in preaching, as far as my other engagements had allowed.

After a pleasant and rapid journey to the coast, but followed by a most uncomfortable voyage of thirteen days in a bullock-ship—which the society of 260 head of cattle, a sharp attack of Malagasy fever, and an utter want of every comfort, made a most trying time—I reached Port Louis; and after recruiting there for three weeks, proceeded homewards by the Cape mail, arriving at Hull on the 24th of August, exactly four years from the date of my leaving England.

Since my return home, the news of the repeal of the ancient laws forbidding the erection of stone buildings in the city proper, led to a reconsideration of the design for the Ampàmarìnana church. Accordingly, it was decided that this, like the other three buildings, should be of stone, so that Mr. Ellis's original proposal will in due time be accomplished. In the case of several of the other large city congregations, they have, partly aided by friends in England, but in a great measure also by their own exertions, rebuilt their houses of prayer in a substantial and ornamental manner, of sun-dried brick, so that Antanànarìvo now possesses a number of handsome buildings dedicated to the worship of the true God, in the most prominent positions in the city.

I may here add a word or two in reply to the objections which were urged by some against the Memorial Church scheme. These were twofold: it was said that we should be introducing the dangerous principle of veneration for saints and martyrs; and also that, by building such churches, we should hinder the self-help of the people, and restrain them from contributing to the support of their own religious ordinances. It may be satisfactory to such objectors to assure them that the first of these anticipated evils is entirely imaginary. Our people have not shown any such predilections, nor have we perceived the slightest tendency to pay undue honour to the memory of those who sealed their faith with their blood.

The second objection might be urged with some plausibility. Still, the utmost that can be said is, that the congregations who now worship in these churches were relieved from the expense of building a plain structure themselves; and, with regard to the people generally, we have had gratifying proofs of the rapid growth of a spirit of liberality and self-help, evinced in a variety of ways, as already narrated. (See chapter xv.)

On the other side, it may be urged that we have given to the Christians of Madagascar four substantial and durable houses of prayer, which testify to the steadfastness and courage of those to whose fidelity to conscience and to truth their country owes, under God, its greatest blessing—a scriptural faith. And we have shown, in a very striking and tangible manner, the sympathy of British churches with their persecuted brethren, and our belief that "the righteous should be in everlasting remembrance."

Great buildings have always been a power, and have given a certain fixed and enduring character to all systems with which they have been connected. And although our

faith is not in buildings, but in principles, yet even minor aids like these are not to be despised. Probably nothing else would have given the non-Christian Malagasy such a real, visible, and convincing proof of the deep interest taken by English Christians in the establishment of the Gospel in their island. These stone buildings are a witness that we believe in our religion, that we desire earnestly to extend its blessings to them, and that, as far as we have any influence, Christianity shall be an enduring and settled *fact* in Madagascar: not a temporary thing, symbolised by a frail building of rush or clay, but lasting as the solid granite of which these churches are built.

Besides fulfilling the main purpose which the Memorial Churches are intended to serve, their erection has given a very important stimulus to civilisation. The employment of many workmen for several years, and their training in European methods of construction in masonry, carpentry, the manufacture of tiles, ironwork, etc., has diffused a large amount of valuable knowledge amongst the most intelligent artisan-class, and has put a considerable sum of money into circulation. We have shown them how to build, and to use their own stores of stone and timber and metal; and the native ingenuity and quickness of the people will not allow all this to fall out of recollection. It has already produced valuable results; and we may be sure that the building of the Memorial Churches at Antanànarìvo will be long regarded as a marked and important era in the religious and material progress of Madagascar.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

THE "RUKH" OF MADAGASCAR (*Æpyornis maximus*).

MUCH interest was excited some years ago, by a communication to the French Academy of Sciences of a discovery made, in 1850, by a M. Abadie, in Madagascar, of a bird's egg, the capacity or contents of which equalled those of six ostriches' eggs, or of 148 eggs of the common fowl. M. Isidore Geoffroy St.-Hilaire, whose description of this enormous egg, and of some fragments of bone supposed to belong to the bird, is given in the "Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Sciences,"* proposed for it the name of *Æpyornis maximus.* The materials were enough to call forth the speculative opinions of naturalists, but were too scanty to demonstrate the kind of bird that could have come out of such an egg. Professor Valenciennes, after a study of the fossil fragments, gave it as his opinion that they belonged to a gigantic penguin. Professor Bianconi, of Bologna, devoted a goodly treatise to prove that they were parts of a bird of prey, vastly surpassing the condor in size, representing the "roc" of Arabian romance—an eagle large enough to carry off a bullock or young elephant in its claws. Marco Polo† wrote: "The people of the island (Madagascar) report that at a certain season of the year an extraordinary kind of bird, which they call a 'rukh,' makes its appearance from the southern region."

This notice may apply to an Æpyornis, which might be living in Madagascar, as the dodo was in the neighbouring island of Mauritius, at the period of Marco Polo's wanderings. It does not follow, however, that the rukh could fly; there is no testimony to that effect.

* Tom. xxxii. 1851, p. 101. A translation of this memoir appeared in the "Annals and Magazine of Natural History" for March 1851.

† Marsden's edition, 4to. London 1818, p. 707.

Supposing an Arab merchant, in the palmy days of Haroun Al Raschid, sailing from Bagdad to Madagascar, to have possessed himself of one of these eggs, it might well suggest, by a comparison with the egg of the vulture or eagle, a bird of prey big enough to bear aloft a young elephant. Professor Owen,* however, concurs with Isidore Geoffroy St.-Hilaire, in referring them to a three-toed species of terrestrial or struthious bird, differing generically from Dinornis, not surpassing in height the *D. giganteus*, and probably having a shorter rather than a longer metatarsal bone than in that gigantic three-toed bird from New Zealand.

In 1868, a M. Grandidier discovered in the marshy soil at Amboulitsale, on the west coast of Madagascar, a leg-bone (tibia), a thigh-bone (femur) nearly entire, and two vertebræ, of a bird corresponding in magnitude with the previously obtained remains of Æpyornis. These are now in the Jardin des Plantes, and have been described by MM. Grandidier and Alphonse Milne-Edwards.†

The following are the dimensions recorded by those naturalists, to which are added corresponding admeasurements of the same bones of the enormous species of Dinornis described by Professor Owen in the "Transactions of the Zoological Society."‡

Dimensions of Tibia.

		Æpyornis max.		Dinornis max.			
		In.	Lines.	In.	Lines.		
Length (64 centimètres) . . .	=	24	11	39	4	=	100 centim.
Circumf. of upper end (45 centim.)	=	17	8	21	3	=	54 ,,
,, middle (15½ centim.) .	=	6	0	8	6	=	22 ,,
,, lower end (38 centim.)	=	14	11	17	8	=	45 ,,

Dimensions of Metatarsal.

		In.	Lines.	In.	Lines.		
Length (38 centimètres) . . .	=	15	0	19	6	=	50 centim.
Transverse diam. (least) (8 centim.)	=	3	2	3	0	=	7¾ ,,

From these dimensions we gather that the rukh was about the

* Notes on the Egg and Portions of Leg-bones of Æpypornis, read before the Zoological Society, January, 1852 (Proceedings, p. 9).

† Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Sciences, tom. lxix. p. 802 (Séance de Lundi, 11 Octobre, 1869).

‡ Vol. vi. p. 497, plates 89 and 90.

height of an ostrich; but, like the *Dinornis elephantopus*, was a more robust bird, especially in the legs and feet. Milne-Edwards and Grandidier announce evidences of two smaller kinds of Æpyornis one the height of a cassowary (*d'un casoar*), the other of a bustard (*la grande outarde*). It is probable, therefore, that further researches may show the island of Madagascar to have been tenanted by as numerous and varied a family of rukhs as New Zealand was of moas.

The largest known kind of Æpyornis is represented in the British Museum by casts of the original specimens described by St.-Hilaire. The only specimen of the egg which appears to have reached this country was secured by George D. Rowley, Esq., who published, in 1864, an interesting account of it. We quote from this memoir the following dimensions:—"Shape, an ellipse; major axis, $12\frac{1}{4}$ in.; minor axis, $9\frac{3}{8}$ in.; great circumference, $34\frac{3}{16}$ in.; small circumference, $29\frac{1}{6}$ in.; weight, avoirdupois, 3 lbs. $11\frac{1}{2}$ oz., nearly. Contrast these with the following, taken from ostrich-eggs in my cabinet:—Smooth North African ostrich: major axis, $6\frac{1}{8}$ in.; minor axis, 5 in.; great circumference, $18\frac{3}{4}$ in.; less circumference, 17 in. A rough South African ostrich has major axis, $5\frac{5}{8}$ in.; great circumference, $17\frac{5}{8}$ in.; less circumference, $16\frac{1}{2}$ in."

Mr. Rowley states that his specimen of rukh's egg "was found at Mananzary, on the east coast, at a depth of 45 ft., in a hill of ferruginous clay (*dans le terrain diluvien*), by Malgaches, when digging for an iron mine. Some bones are said to have been found with the egg, but they were, unfortunately, broken before they were taken out." *—"The Academy," Nov. 13, 1869, p. 45.

APPENDIX B.

Notes on the Natural History of the Island.

In Commodore Dupré's book, "Trois mois de Séjour à Madagascar," a very interesting monograph on the Natural History of the country is appended by Dr. Aug. Vinson, who accompanied the French diplomatic mission to Antanànarìvo in 1862, as physician and naturalist. As Dr. Vinson was only in the island three months,

* "On the Egg of Æpyornis," p. 6.

and was unable to explore the country except in the immediate neighbourhood of the capital, and on the route from Tamatave, his discoveries could not be very extensive; yet he was able to supply some accurate information as to the different species of lemur, and to assign them their proper place in the order to which they belong. In entomology, he discovered several new species of butterfly; determined exactly the genus and species of the moth from whose chrysalis the native silk is procured; and described scientifically the two spiders which are considered as the only dangerously venomous creatures in the island. From his lively and picturesque sketch, I take the following particulars, to supplement the notices on the subject given in the text.

Dr. Vinson describes the Plain of Ankày, between the Angàvo and Àlamazaòtra hills, as formed of sedimentary beds, rich in fossil remains; but, unfortunately, he gives no hint as to the character or antiquity of these alleged organisms. It seems, therefore, still reserved for future travellers to determine the geological age of the later formations of Madagascar. He confirms the opinion of others as to the *ancient* character of much of the interior, from the prevalence of primary rocks.

Speaking of the flora of the island, Dr. Vinson quotes the words of the French botanist, Dupetit Thouars, who, after ten years spent in studying the vegetation of Mauritius, Réunion, and Madagascar, said that ten years more would be necessary to become acquainted with the last alone. Commerson, in a letter to Linnæus, represented Madagascar as the land of promise for botanists, so much was he impressed by its beauty, although he had already sailed round the world with Bougainville. After enumerating some of the more remarkable trees (mentioned in chapter iv.), Dr. Vinson concludes his notice of the flora by saying that " building timber, woods for cabinet-work and for enrichments, edible and medicinal, textile and useful plants, all abound in this favoured country, which nourishes at its base all the vegetation of the tropics, and at its summit that of the temperate zones."

The lemurs found in the forest by Dr. Vinson belonged to the genus *Indris*, and are known in the country under the names of *babacootes* and *simepounes*. The first of these is *I. niger*, and for the second he proposes the name of *I. albus*. Both are about

33 inches in height, the fur thick and soft to the touch. Some of the tribes inhabiting the interior have a great veneration for the babacootes. They buy the animals to set them at liberty when they find them in captivity, or to give them burial when they have been killed. They relate that a certain tribe, at war with its neighbours, took refuge and was hidden in the forests; their enemies, in pursuing them, led by the sound of human voices, found before them a troop of babacootes, by whose appearance they were struck with terror. They fled, persuaded that the fugitives had been changed into beasts. These, on the contrary, vowed eternal gratitude to the quadrumana who had saved them.

Birds obtained by DR. VINSON, *in Madagascar.*

Vòromahèry (powerful bird), *Falco Radama*, G. Verr.; royal bird of the Hovas.

Papàngo (hawk), *Circus maillardi*, G. Verr.; a bird of prey, brown in colour.

Black parroquet, *Psitticus vaza*, Shaw.

Coccyrus cæruleus, Veillot; a beautiful bird of a magnificent blue, shaded with violet.

Coucal, *Centropus philippipensis.*

Effraie, an owl, *Stryx flamma*, Linn.

Columba, or blue pigeon, *Columba Madagascariensis.*

Bronze goose, or cabòka of the Malagasy, *Anser melanotis*, Veillot.

Many species of teal; *Anas Mad.*, *Anas Bernieri*, *Anas viduata.*

Maroon jacana, with white nape, *Parra albinuca*; killed on the Iharòka.

Diver, *Pædiceps minor*; killed on the Queen's lake.

Sea-gull of Hartlaub, *Larus H.*; killed at Antanànarìvo, 140 miles inland.

Souimanga, *Cinnyris* of Madagascar.

Many herons or egrets, *Ardea nisata*, *A. elegans.* Also a third species, probably new, resembling *A. malaccensis.*

Tufted ibis, *Ibis cristata.*

Several species of kingfisher, *Alcedo cristata*, *A. rubra.*

Figuier, new species of genus *Dicæum.*

Chaffinch, probably a new species, beak black above and violet below.

Insects.

Dineutes proximus (Aubé). *Ctenicera nobilis* (Illig.). *Captonia prasina* (Burm.)

Many other *Cetonia*. *Apoderus numeralis* (Olliv.). *A. camelus* (Olliv.).

Tophoderes penatus (King). *Lixus defloratus* (Olliv.). *Holonichus acanthopus* (Chev.).

A beautiful speckled stellognath. *Euporus Mad.*, a species allied to *molorchus*, which probably should constitute a new genus. Several of the rose-beetles, *Melolontha* or *Encya Commersonii.*

The lepidoptera are numerous and varied in Madagascar; they are particularly remarkable for the richness of their colours. It is allowed that the most beautiful butterfly known belongs to this island. It is the *Urania riphæa* of Cramer, with transverse green markings, and splendid gold reflections, which shine from its richly-coloured wings. It is found from the capital to S. Marie's. In the woods of Àlamazàotra Dr. Vinson obtained a beautiful *Salamis*, of a brilliant white, and remarkable for its shape—the largest probably of its genus, the wings laterally forked and a great reddish V below. With it was a group of *Papilio epiphorba*, and others of the same genus. In the middle of the capital, a charming blue butterfly, *Salamis Radàma*, was caught. This butterfly was accidentally introduced into the island of Réunion about 1850, and has there multiplied to such an extent that it has become more common than in Madagascar itself.

" The habits of the lepidoptera are affected in Madagascar, perhaps more than anywhere else, by atmospheric changes. In the mornings, while the thick and cold mists envelope the marshy districts, so harmful to Europeans, and cover them as if with a white smoke, everything sleeps or hides itself under the dark and damp foliage; but as soon as the sun shines out with tropical strength, the forest, the footpath, the beds of the torrents, are peopled with bright-coloured and light-flying butterflies. They give themselves up to all kinds of frolic with a wanton joy; they court, they pursue, they fly, interlacing and eddying in their flight in the air like the brilliant flakes of a coloured snow.

" If the employment of caterpillars and chrysalides for food excites

our repugnance, we owe a just tribute of praise to the means the Hovas have employed to make use of their threads. No country seems better adapted than theirs for silk culture. In Imérina and the neighbouring provinces, numbers of caterpillars cover themselves with silky envelopes for preservation both from the colds of winter and the rains of summer. Some cover themselves from their birth with a mantle in which they develope and move about, allowing nothing to appear outside except claws to suspend themselves to plants, and their head to devour the leaves. I have found these caterpillars upon a species of morelle, common in the neighbourhood of the capital. Some others effect their metamorphoses in a cocoon in many folds—some use in the formation of their covering vegetable matter artistically employed. There are also others who establish themselves in a republic, in a common chamber, formed of a silky felt, in the midst of which each spins its own cocoon. The mulberry tree and the Chinese silkworm have been naturalised; but the silk destined to become most abundant in the island is what they call *làndy*, and is obtained from a caterpillar which feeds on the ambàrivàtry (*Cytisus cajanus*). This silk is thick, without brilliancy, but extremely strong, and serves to weave a cloth of remarkable durability. It is affirmed that pieces of this silk, when exhumed from the graves, where they have been for centuries enveloping the dead, have lost nothing of their firmness.

"The caterpillar which produces this silk is 2¼ inches long; it is of a maroon colour, finely striped with a dark-brown. It is formed of twelve segments, and has eight pair of feet; it is spotted with black spines, and carries on its back, near the head, four retractile tufts of spines or fur, disposed in rosettes. These spines are erected when the insect is irritated. The cocoon is greyish-yellow, five centimètres long by eight in circumference. The chrysalis is large and maroon-coloured; it is eaten in Madagascar. The butterfly which proceeds from it is of medium size; the female, larger than the male, is eight centimètres from one extremity of the upper wings to the other when expanded. Its general colour is pearl-grey. The body is a little more than three centimètres long; it is thick, clumsy, and charged with silvery eggs. The male is red in wings and body.

"This butterfly, which ought to be reckoned amongst the

Bombycidæ, belongs to the genus *Brocera* (*Boisduval*), and might form a new species, *B. cajani*, on account of the plant which nourishes the caterpillar.

"The Malagasy do not wind the cocoon, they card and twine it, after having boiled it in order to loosen the hairs with which the caterpillar in spinning stiffens its winding-sheet. Without this preliminary operation, these hairs would become a source of danger to the eyes and the hands. The silk is of a clear grey; it is under this natural colour that it is mostly used, but it is sometimes tinted with various vegetable and earthy dyes. A solution of iron and certain acids is employed as a mordant.

"Arachnology is one of the newest divisions of the entomology of Madagascar. On the coast only a few species of spider are found, but their number is great in the interior. The largest spider is a great epeira, of the tuberculous species, which the Malagasy call *hàla-bé*. Another, black and large, with white prominences, fixes lines of a prodigious length above watercourses. In the woods are found fome very beautiful gasteracanths with curved spines; there are also some olios, a spotted selenaps, a white philodrome, &c.

"It has long been known, through Flacourt and other travellers, that it is amongst the spiders we must place the most venomous animals of Madagascar. The dangerous spiders are of two kinds: the first is black and small; its abdomen is swelling and rounded on the upper surface; its length is about ten millimètres, and it has a vermilion-red tuft on the posterior part, and another of the same colour, but transversely, in front of the abdomen; between these tufts nine little white points are regularly arranged in three rows. The legs are fine, the first and fourth pairs being the longest. The native name is *mènavòdy*. There is but one opinion as to the danger of its bite. Flacourt says that those bitten fall into a swoon and become cold as ice. The people use as remedies the infusion of certain plants, and exposing the patient to a strong fire. At Antanànarìvo they make use of incisions and cauterisation.

"I was fortunate enough to procure some of these spiders, still undescribed scientifically. I know not what to think of the universal dread which they inspire, but I have arrived at a result which leaves no room for surprise—which is, that they should be placed, by their generic characters, by the side of the malignant latrodect of Elba

and Corsica, whose bite is believed to be mortal; and by the side of the *Latrodectus mactans* of Martinique, whose venom is equally malignant. I propose to give to this spider the name of *Latrodectus menavody.*

"The second, whose bite is also mortal, and is followed, they say, by swelling, which begins at the part wounded and spreads through the whole body, is the *fòka* or crab-spider. It has the form of a little crab; its length is eleven millimètres; the cephalo-thorax is strong and rounded; the abdomen trapezoidal, and straight at the anterior portion. All the body is of a maroon-brown, covered with tubercles; the legs are short, thickset, and sprinkled with roughnesses, as in a crustacean of the genus *Parthenope.* I have not yet been able to class this spider, whose exceptional form has no analogy that I know of in arachnology. Perhaps it will be necessary to create for it a new genus."

To the above particulars collected by Dr. Vinson, it may be added, that, with the exception of the two spiders already described, the country is remarkably free from noxious animals. The serpents are small, and are said to be harmless; scorpions and centipedes are not uncommon, but are less numerous than in most tropical countries. During the whole of my stay in Madagascar I never once caught sight of either of these unpleasant creatures. The bite of each is exceedingly painful, and at times is difficult to heal, but with moderate care is not dangerous. Mosquitoes are annoying in the hot and wet season, but the interior of the island is mostly free from some other insect plagues—beetles, cockroaches, and large house-spiders.

There are several species of a beautifully-marked lizard of small size (*Gerrhosaurus:* see engraving, p. 96), and also of chameleons, including the singular fork-nosed species (*C. bifidus*). In this curious creature the muzzle is prolonged into two distinct branches. One of the largest of the genus, the warty chameleon (*C. Verrucosus*), is also a native of Madagascar. Amongst the tortoises, the large elephantine and the smaller species called box-tortoise (*Pyxis*) are common.

The insectivorous animals are represented by several species of tenrec, a small creature, commonly called the Madagascar rat, and belonging to the family *Talpidæ.*

Land-shells are numerous; one of the largest, the queen-conch (*Cassis Mad.*), is used as a horn on state occasions.

APPENDIX C.

NOTES ON THE MALAGASY LANGUAGE.

THE language spoken by the Malagasy people is without doubt allied to the extensive family of tongues known as Malayo-Polynesian, which, in wideness of geographical diffusion, probably exceeds that of any other group of kindred languages. It extends in longitude over more than one-half the circumference of the globe, from Madagascar nearly to the shores of South America; and over 4000 miles of latitude, from the Sandwich Islands in the north to New Zealand in the south. The illustrious linguist, Baron Humboldt, in a letter to the Rev. J. J. Freeman, said, "There is no doubt that the Malagasy belongs to the family of the Malayan languages, and bears the greatest affinity to those spoken in Java, Sumatra, and the whole Indian Archipelago. But it remains entirely enigmatical in what manner and at what period this Malayan population has made its way to Madagascar. Of Sanscrit words there is a certain number in the Malagasy language."

A comparison of the words in a Malagasy vocabulary with those of Malayan, as given in the works of Marsden and Craufurd, shows that many words are absolutely identical with those spoken in the Malay peninsula. But a far more decisive proof of the affinity of the two languages is the similarity of *structure*—especially the manner of forming the verbal inflections, the want of declensions to indicate gender, number, and case, together with many other analogies. These circumstances are quite sufficient to prove the *intimate relations* of the two languages, if not their *identity of origin*.

A number of words resembling Arabic forms are found in Malagasy, some of which are probably of modern introduction, while many are no doubt derived from a common source. Although so near to Africa, the language of Madagascar seems to have no connection with the Mozambique or Kaffir tongues. Natives of the continent can hold no intercourse with the Malagasy people until they have learned the language of the island.

The oneness of the language spoken all over Madagascar has already been mentioned (page 269); but it may be added, that although some little time is required for a foreigner accustomed only

to the Hova dialect to understand and converse freely in those spoken on the coast, yet the general similarity in the groundwork of them all, soon enables anyone who has acquired the language in one part of the country, to hold intercourse with the natives of other districts; while the books printed at the capital can be read and understood by natives of other provinces, each retaining his own mode of pronouncing certain letters.

The verb is capable of a great variety of meaning, by the addition of prefixes to the root, which is generally a passive participle. By means of these prefixes, active, neuter, causative, reciprocal, reciprocal-causative, and other shades of meaning are given, so that in some cases nearly two hundred words and verbal forms are derived from one root.

The Rev. J. J. Freeman, one of the early missionaries to the island, and author of the English-Malagasy Dictionary, says:—"The general structure of the language is characterised by simplicity and perspicuity. Sentences are usually short, and unembarrassed by circumlocution or intricacy. There is a considerable use made of figurative expressions, but the figure is rather in the whole idea or sentiment of the passage than in the particular words employed. The language is by no means incapable of the charms and power of oratory. Many of the leading men in the several districts, who, by virtue of their office or station, are frequently intrusted with affairs of business, and are consequently in the habit of public speaking, possess highly respectable abilities as public orators. Their success, however, seems to depend far more on well-timed addresses to the passions and predilections of their auditors, than on any process of long and laboured ratiocination. Their style admits of the repetition of the same idea, and in the same terms, in order to impress any sentiment that is considered particularly emphatic.

"The very extensive use of a figurative mode of expression constitutes one of the charms of the Malagasy language. It renders description lively and animated, and amply compensates for the absence of various abstract terms which, in a more cultivated state of society, may be expected. Several of these figurative expressions consist of compound words; in other cases they are phrases. Of both of these, a few examples may be adduced:—*Mitsambòki-mikìmpy:* literally, 'to take a leap while winking;' figuratively, 'to venture

rashly.' *Mitsìpi-dòhà-làka-mitàna:* a phrase compounded by contractions into one word, but which, written at full length, would be, literally, 'to kick the head of the canoe that crosses' (the water); figuratively, "to ill requite a kindness," or, as in the English proverb, 'to speak ill of the bridge that carries you safely over.' *Ràno-màso-tsy-mìarak'àmam-pàty:* literally, 'water of the eye (tears) not following together with the dying,' *i.e.* 'not weeping at the time of the death' (of a friend); figuratively, 'doing something out of season; too late for the occasion; repentance too late.' *Manìsa-ràvina:* literally, 'to count leaves;' figuratively, 'to entertain wild flights of the imagination.' *Manào-arìary-zàto-àmpandrìana:* literally, 'to make a hundred dollars on his bed;' figuratively, 'to build castles in the air.' *Màndri-àndri-andèfona:* literally, 'to lie down upon a spear;' figuratively, 'to be in a state of painful anxiety; to lie upon thorns.'

"Of native compositions it is difficult to give examples, and for the simple reason, that no literature, except that prepared by Europeans, has yet existed in the country. The national mind has not yet been committed to a written form or standard. A large amount, however, of current and prevailing thoughts and sentiments exists traditionally, and a portion of this has been committed to writing during the last few years, consisting of the *proverbial sayings* which have been handed down from time immemorial, and embodying the principal part of the language; besides these are native fables, legends, songs, enigmas, and the studied forms of address used on all solemn and public occasions—as in the public assemblies, marriages, ordeals, funerals, etc.

"The fables, which are numerous, are not remarkable for any striking or valuable qualities. Many of them are pleasing and amusing, but by far the larger number are feeble and puerile; some are of a decidedly vicious tendency; and a few are adapted to instil ideas of loyalty, filial duty, honesty, and industry. The legends are copious, but of little value. They contain no system; they imply no system of ethics, theology, or philosophy. The proverbial sayings present the fullest exhibition of the grade of mind among the people, both intellectually and morally, and especially if the 'Hàintèny' be added to the 'Òhabòlana.' The latter are more properly proverbs, or short sententious sayings; and the former, mere lengthened popular

repartees, jocose quiddities, and often amorous trifles, embracing puns, paronomasia, unmeaning words for the sake of sound, and ditties capable of almost any solution the hearer pleases."*

In Malagasy we have a tongue which, until the last two or three generations, has probably suffered no material change for many centuries. This is of course due in a great measure to the isolation of the people from the outer world; for the slight intercourse which Arab and Persian traders have kept up with parts of the north-west coast have been of too slight a character to influence the language to any great extent. Mr. Griffiths, in his Grammar, describes Malagasy as "A language abounding in vowels, so mellifluous and soft that it might be called the Italian of the southern hemisphere. Its character is so peculiar, philosophical, and original, as to render it truly amazing that uneducated and uncivilised people should have preserved it in such perfection. They have no literature; the language has, therefore, reached its present stage of excellence merely by ordinary conversation, speeches in the public assemblies, and pleadings in the courts of justice."

Although in some points there is a simplicity, not to say poverty, in Malagasy which does not admit of that refined distinction of thought which some European and Asiatic tongues can express with so much delicacy, yet this simple character does not necessarily imply a low mental capacity in the people using it, but is rather a result of their isolation. While there is some difficulty in expressing abstract truths, yet the language has a great power of appropriating foreign words, and, by slightly altering the vowel-sounds, conforms them to its own laws of pronunciation.

Together with the deficiency above mentioned, there is a redundancy of terms for other subjects, generally in regard to matters in which we should think it hardly worth while to make minute distinctions. For example, there are nearly twenty different words to describe the different ways in which a bullock's horns may be curved; and in dressing the hair, more than thirty distinct words are used in speaking of the variety of plaits, arrangement, &c. This peculiarity, however, seems common to most Eastern tongues, and is not confined to Malagasy.

The language has a striking peculiarity in its preference for the

* "History of Madagascar," vol. i. p. 514.

passive, instead of the *active* form of the verb, arising, it is to be presumed, from some inherent tendency in the people to the former habit of thought. Take, for example, the root *hìta*, "seen." Nine times out of ten, when saying "I see," a Malagasy would express it by *Hìtako*, literally, "Seen by me," rather than by the active form, *Mahìta àho.* The verbal inflections are formed by adding parts of the personal pronouns to the roots, and the possessive of the noun is formed by additions in the same manner. The nominative generally follows the verb, and the adjective the noun. It is a curious fact that there is no plural form for nouns.

Many interesting examples might be given of what Archbishop Trench calls the "morality in words." In speaking of divorce and polygamy, two of such have been already noticed (page 197). The native word for "hypocrisy" is *fihiatsàrambèlatsìhy;* literally translated, this means "to become good by spreading a mat," and to one unacquainted with the habits of the people it would be a puzzling expression. But when we remember that the walls and floors of native houses are covered with straw mats, beneath whose freshness the rough walls, the clay and cowdung plastering, and the dirty and soiled floor, are hidden, it is seen to be an appropriate figure. All can be made neat and clean in a little time by spreading a fresh mat, but it only conceals and does not remove the filth and rottenness beneath.

In public prayers offered by Christian natives, the following expression is frequently used in addressing God: *Milèla-pàladìa anao izahày:* literally, "We lick the soles of Thy feet." This, to us, curious expression is explained by a reference to the earliest accounts of the country, from which it appears that it was formerly the custom for slaves and captives to show their subjection by licking their masters' and captors' feet; and wives performed the same homage to their husbands. Although the custom has become obsolete, in Imérina at least, its remembrance is retained in this expression of deep humiliation, which is used as an appropriate phrase to show man's reverence for God.

Many single words have much poetic beauty in them: thus, a river is *rèni-ràno*, "mother of waters;" the sun is *màso-àndro*, "the eye of day;" the capital is *rèni-vòhitra*, "mother of cities." The idea of "continually" is expressed by the word *màndrakarìva*, literally, "until the evening;" while the language, like almost every

other tongue, has difficulty in expressing the idea of ceaseless duration; and for the words "for ever and ever" uses *mùndrakìzay, mùndrakìzay*—literally, "until that, until that."

The Malagasy tongue was first reduced to a written form by the missionaries of the London Missionary Society. By them its structure and grammar were determined, and vocabularies, grammars, and dictionaries prepared. The Roman character was of course adopted; the vowels have the same power as in the French, except *o*, which is pronounced like *o* in move. *U* is not used, its sound being expressed by *io*. *I* and *y* are identical, the latter being used always at the end of words. The consonants *c*, *q*, *w*, and *x* are not employed. In adopting European words, a vowel is inserted between many of the consonants which we combine. From this love of vowels the spoken language has a smoothness and softness very pleasing to the ear, with great freedom from the hard guttural and sibilant sounds of the tongues of Northern Europe and Western Asia.

Malagasy is a comparatively easy language to acquire. Far less time is necessary to understand and speak it intelligibly than is the case with most of the Indian languages, to say nothing of the Chinese. Many have been able to preach in Malagasy within six months after arriving in the country; though, of course, to master the niceties of the tongue requires time and much attention, and constant intercourse with the people.

As illustrations of the structure of Malagasy the following examples are given—the Lord's Prayer and two verses from a native hymn:—

"Rainay Izay any an-danitra, Hasino ny anaranao. Ampandrosoy ny fanjakanao. Atavy ny sitra-ponao aty an-tany, tahaky ny any an-danitra. Omeo anay anio izay hanina sahaza ho anay. Ary mamelà ny trosanay, tahaky ny famelanay ny mitrosa aminay. Ary aza mitarikia anay ho amy ny fakam-panahy, fa manafaha anay amy ny ratsy; Fa anao ny fanjakana, sy ny hery ary ny voninahitra, mandrakizay. Amena."

"1. Jeso, Tompo, mamindrà-fo
Amy ny mpanomponao;
Fa tsy misy famonjena,
Afa tsy ny aminao:
O vonjeo
Ny mifona aminao.

"2. Fa kamboty sy mahantra,
Ory, osa, reraka,
Izahay aty an-tany,
Raha tsy vimbininao;
O ampio
Ny miankin' aminao."

It has been asserted by several French writers that the Arabic character has been introduced into certain parts of the coast, and that books and some scientific treatises were written in it. Flacourt speaks of twenty-eight books of this kind. But, whatever truth there may be in these statements, it is pretty certain that the use of Arabic letters must have been very local in extent, and probably they were but little employed except for purposes of trade. No such books have been seen at the capital, and Arabic has had very little influence on the native language; nothing is known of it by any of the Hovas in the central provinces.

During a missionary tour in the autumn of 1867, in the south-east provinces, the Rev. Mr. Campbell, of the Church Missionary Society, discovered some traces of the influence of Arabic amongst the Antimours (see map). He says: "One of the inhabitants told me that the Antimours did not understand our letters, but read and wrote the Arabic character. I requested him to write his name in my notebook, which he did from right to left in true Eastern style. Before his name he wrote what he called *isha*, and on asking what that meant, he replied that he did not know, but it was *ny fombany ny olona any Maka*—'the custom of the people at Maka' (probably Mecca)." * It is well known that the chief settlements of the Arabs in the eastern portions of Madagascar were on this part of the coast.

APPENDIX D.

PROCLAMATION OF RADÀMA I., ABOLISHING THE SLAVE TRADE IN MADAGASCAR, OCTOBER, 1817.

"INHABITANTS OF MADAGASCAR!

"You are none of you ignorant of the friendship we enjoy with the Governor of Mauritius, and the devoted attachment we have avowed

* "Church Missionary Intelligencer," July, 1868.

to him. His attention, unlike that of all other foreign nations that have visited our shores, has been directed to increase our happiness and prosperity. He has never deprived us of our rights or our properties; he has not suffered the white men to carry off our children into slavery; he has sent us people to teach us arts and industry unknown before, to defend us against our enemies, and to prevent famine by more extensive cultivation. We are safer and happier since the establishment of British dominion in our neighbourhood, and we are grateful to our good father, who has produced for us these blessings.

"His nation and king have made laws to prevent you from being carried out of your island into slavery; and he has punished such of the whites as have presumed to violate this law.

"He has called us to assist him in this work for our own benefit; and he has promised his powerful assistance to punish such as may be refractory or disobedient.

"We willingly agree to this proposal of our father; and we hereby declare, that if any of our subjects, or persons depending on our power, shall henceforward be guilty of selling any slave, or other person, for the purpose of being transported from the island of Madagascar, the person guilty shall be punished by being reduced to slavery himself, and his property shall be forfeited to me.

"Let my subjects, then, who have slaves employ them in planting rice and other provisions, and in taking care of their flocks; in collecting beeswax and gums, and in manufacturing cloths and other articles, which they can sell. I set them the first example myself, by abandoning the tax payable to me upon the sale of slaves for exportation.

"I direct my brother, Jean René, and other chiefs upon the sea-coasts, to seize, for their own use and profit, all such slaves as may be attempted to be exported in their respective provinces; they will also give every support and assistance to the government agent of Mauritius in the execution of his duties.

* * * * *

"Such is my will; let it be known to every inhabitant of this island. It is for their own happiness and their own safety to pay obedience to this proclamation." *

* "History of Madagascar," vol. ii. p. 196.

APPENDIX E.

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF MADAGASCAR, FROM CONSULAR REPORTS.

	£	s.	d.
Exports for 1862, chiefly to Mauritius and Bourbon . .	70,707	6	9
„ 1864 „ „ „ . .	72,677	0	9
„ 1865 „ „ „ . .	66,873	2	2
Imports for 1862	57,714	19	10
„ 1864	32,731	15	3
„ 1865	40,082	9	9

	No.		£	s.	d.
Oxen exported in 1862 ..	10,891 ..	of the value of	56,124	0	9
„ 1864 ..	10,176 ..	„	50,661	0	9
„ 1865 ..	10,200 ..	„	50,935	0	0
	Cwt.				
Rice exported in 1862 ..	20,675 ..	„	8,868	9	5
„ 1864 ..	20,633 ..	„	12,511	17	0
„ 1865 ..	16,817 ..	„	10,820	13	0

It will be seen from the above figures that bullocks and rice are the great staple exports of the country, the greater part of the revenue being derived from the duty upon them. The following articles come next in importance, but are quite insignificant compared with these two:—

			£	s.	d.
Leather . . .	189 cwt. ..	of the value of	546	7	0
Ròfia cloth . .	47,935 pieces ..	„	607	6	0
Starch . . .	736 cwt. ..	„	397	1	0
Tobacco (manufactured)	16,856 lbs. ..	„	560	0	0

Of the 40,082*l.* 9*s.* 9*d.*, the value of the imports for 1865, the following form the chief items:—

			£	s.	d.
Plain manufactured cotton	834,032 yards,	of the value of	13,342	3	6
Coloured „ „	339,874 „	„	7,064	0	0
Haberdashery, mercery, etc.	..	„	5,073	8	0
Hardware and cutlery .	..	„	1,152	15	0
Salt	1,100 tons	„	1,151	6	0
Rum	118,000 gals.	„	5,946	10	0

APPENDIX F.

The Imanènjana, or Dancing Mania.

In the month of February, 1863, the Europeans resident at Antanànarivo, the capital of Madagascar, began to hear rumours of a new disease, which it was said had appeared in the west or south-west. The name given to it by the natives was "imanènjana," and the dancers were called "ramanènjana," which probably comes from a root signifying to make tense. The name did not convey any idea of its nature, and the accounts given of it were so vague as to mystify rather than enlighten. After a time, however, it reached the capital, and in the month of March began to be common. At first, parties of two or three were to be seen, accompanied by musicians and other attendants, dancing in the public places; and in a few weeks these had increased to hundreds, so that one could not go out-of-doors without meeting bands of these dancers. It spread rapidly, as by a sort of infection, even to the most remote villages in the central province of Imérina; so that, having occasion to visit a distant part of the country in company with an Englishman, we found, even in remote hamlets, and, more wonderful still, near solitary cottages, the sound of music, indicating that the mania had spread even there.*

The public mind was in a state of excitement at that time, on account of the remarkable political and social changes introduced by the late king, Radàma II. A pretty strong anti-Christian, anti-European party had arisen, who were opposed to progress and change. This strange epidemic got into sympathy, especially in the capital, with this party, and the native Christians had no difficulty in recognising it as a demoniacal possession. There was universal consternation at the spread of this remarkable disease, and the consternation favoured its propagation.

Those affected belonged chiefly, but not by any means exclusively, to the lower classes. The great majority were young women

* The rapidity was certainly remarkable, but not to be compared with what is related of the outbreak of the child-pilgrimage of Erfurt, when, on the 15th of July, 1237, one thousand children assembled, as if by instinctive impulse, without preconcert and unknown to their parents.

between fourteen and twenty-five years of age; there were, however, a considerable number of men to be seen amongst the dancers—but they certainly did not exceed one-fourth of the entire number, and these also belonged mostly to the lower orders of society.

Very few, indeed scarcely any, Christians came under this influence; no doubt partly because the general spirit of dissatisfaction and superstitious unrest did not affect them directly. Their sympathies were rather *with* those changes, political and social, which disturbed the masses. They were, so to speak, beyond the reach of the current. Their exemption may be partly explained by their superior education, mental and moral, but was also very manifestly owing to their firm conviction that the whole affair was a demoniacal possession of their heathen countrymen which could not affect them as Christians. They could thus look at it as outsiders, with the interest of observers, without the fear which, in such a malady, is one of the means of its propagation.

The patients usually complained of a weight or pain in the præcordia, and great uneasiness, sometimes a stiffness, about the nape of the neck. Others, in addition, had pains in the back and limbs, and in most cases there seems to have been an excited state of the circulation, and occasionally even mild febrile symptoms. One or more of these premonitory symptoms were frequently observed; there were numerous cases where they were absent. After complaining, it may be, one, two, or three days, they became restless and nervous, and if excited in any way, more especially if they happened to hear the sound of music or singing, they got perfectly uncontrollable, and, bursting away from all restraint, escaped from their pursuers and joined the music, when they danced, sometimes for hours together, with amazing rapidity. They moved the head from side to side with a monotonous motion, and the hands, in the same way, alternately up and down. The dancers never joined in the singing, but uttered frequently a deep sighing sound. The eyes were wild, and the whole countenance assumed an indescribable abstracted expression, as if their attention was completely taken off what was going on around them. The dancing was regulated very much by the music, which was always the quickest possible—it never seemed to be quick enough. It often became more of a leaping than a dancing. They thus danced to the astonishment of all, as if pos-

sessed by some evil spirit, and with almost superhuman endurance—exhausting the patience of the musicians, who often relieved each other by turns—then fell down suddenly, as if dead; or, as often happened, if the music was interrupted, they would suddenly rush off as if seized by some new impulse, and continue running, until they fell down, almost or entirely insensible. After being completely exhausted in this way, the patients were taken home, the morbid impulse apparently, in many cases, destroyed. Sometimes the disease, thus stopped, never recurred, but more frequently there was a return. The sight of dancers, or the sound of music, even in the distance, or anything which, by association, seemed connected with the disease, determined a recurrence of the fit.

The patients were fond of carrying sugarcanes about with them. They held them in their hands, or carried them over the shoulder while they danced. Frequently, too, they might be seen going through their singular evolutions with a bottle of water upon their heads, which they succeeded wonderfully in balancing. The drum was the favourite instrument, but others were used, and all were acceptable. When there was no musical instrument to be had, the attendants beat time with their hands, or sung a tune which was a favourite amongst the ramanènjana. There is a sacred stone in a plain below the city, where many of the kings of Madagascar have been crowned. This stone was a favourite rendezvous for them. They danced here for hours together, and concluded by placing the sugarcane, as a sort of offering, upon the stone.

The tombs were also favourite places of resort for these dancers. They met in the evenings, and danced by moonlight for half the night, or longer, amongst the graves.

Many of them professed to have intercourse with the departed, and more particularly with the late queen. In describing their sensations afterwards, some said that they felt as if a dead body was tied to them, so that with all their efforts they could not shake themselves clear of it; others thought that there was a heavy weight continually dragging them downwards or backwards. They disliked, above all things, hats and pigs. The very sight of these objects was so offensive that, in some cases, it threw them into a kind of convulsion, but more frequently excited their rage. Still more inexplicable was their dislike of every article of dress of a black colour.

Swine are reckoned unclean by several tribes in Madagascar, and might thus be an object of superstitious horror. Hats, as associated with foreigners, might similarly be objected to; but what is there in a colour to excite antipathy? Yet this caprice has been so common in this disease, in all its recorded epidemics, as to deserve attention. This phenomenon was likewise observed in the child-pilgrimages of the thirteenth century, which, towards the end, began to assume some of the characteristics of choreomania.

The disease was associated with national prejudices, religious and political. Did these originate it? I think not. They simply afforded, as it were, the condition, or one of the conditions, of its epidemic manifestation. They formed the bond of sympathetic union among the affected. To become epidemic this disease must seize some popular idea or superstition, at once so *firmly* believed as to lay hold of the heart of the people, and so *generally* as to afford scope for the operation of pathological sympathy. Thus, choreomania was associated with the religious superstitions of the middle ages. Manifestly hostile to the priests,—so deep was the hold which the Church exercised over even its *dissatisfied* children, that exorcisms, as we have seen, became one of the most potent means of cure. In Madagascar, in the same way, those who know the respect of the natives for their ancestors, and their unbounded reverence for their resting-places, might *à priori* have decided the form which such a mania would assume in that country. It must further be remembered that choreomania never appears as an epidemic, except when the public mind is deeply agitated by some general cause. In illustration of this, it will be remembered, as Hecker and others have pointed out, that choreomania, in its first outbreak, followed closely upon the black death, " and was to be ascribed to the excitement of men's minds, and the consequence of wretchedness and want." The mental and moral state of the people, induced by such great calamities as the black death and the inundations of the Rhine, and by the political and religious conditions of the period—the feuds of the barons—the corruption of the Church and of public morals, the licentious exercise of power, or the unwarranted resistance of authority, were all exciting causes of its epidemic manifestation.

The disease was rarely fatal; still a few cases of death undoubtedly happened, and these only occurred, so far as I am aware, where

the patient was restrained from joining in the dances. It would seem that *these* actually died from pent-up passion or excitement. The dancing, no doubt, was so far salutary. The music served to regulate and control the wild muscular movements that might otherwise have proved injurious. A most remarkable fact is, that the mere physical exercise, prodigious and long-continued as it is in this disease, seems perfectly harmless. I never heard of its having proved fatal.

The question of the reality of these phenomena requires a few words. No one who saw it can doubt that it was perfectly real as a psychopathy, and no one of candour or discrimination will deny that a certain amount of imposture *was* practised. It was more difficult, however, than one might suppose to feign this disease and act it out consistently. The look, manner, movements, and power of enduring physical exertion, were sufficient to distinguish the simulated from the real. It is remarkable, and should never be lost sight of, how often the most contradictory and opposite feelings and motives seem to be mixed up in such cases. It can easily be understood how many of these ramanènjana may have become the victims of a strong morbid impulse, which they at first either feigned or fostered.—From " Choreomania, an Historical Sketch," by Dr. A. Davidson, F.R.C.P.E., etc.

APPENDIX G.

LEPROSY AND OTHER DISEASES PREVALENT IN THE CENTRAL PORTIONS OF THE ISLAND.

THE elevation of the central province above the sea, from 4000 to 5000 feet, gives, besides exemption from ague and intermittent fever, a more temperate climate than could be expected in a latitude of 18° south. The common variation of temperature is between 58° and 80° F. The rainfall during the wet season, from November to April, is from fifty to sixty inches.

The warm dry weather before the fall of rain is favourable to the

development of typhoid fever, cholera infantum, diarrhœa, and fatal serous inflammations. The warm moist heat of the beginning of the rainy season brings on disorders of the liver and stomach. True dysentery is rare; and neither typhus nor scarlet fever has been seen in Madagascar by Dr. Davidson. Only one patient in a hundred suffers from consumption; acute bronchitis is as rare there amongst adults as it is common here, and acute rheumatism is not common. Worms, especially the lumbricoides, are almost universal; the tape-worm is not uncommon, and is greatly dreaded and abhorred by the people. "Human nature," says Dr. Davidson, "has a kindly side to quacks, and here these parasites seem to infest humanity only a little less than in England. Just now we have a promising slave whose remedy for all diseases is burning round holes in the integument, each about the size of a shilling, by means of strong acid. Whatever part of the body, face, eyes, or chest is the seat of pain, is immediately studded with symmetrical rows of holes, giving anything but a handsome appearance to the patient."

Skin-diseases abound, but favus has not been seen. Those fearful diseases caused by licentious habits are dreadfully prevalent. Insanity is exceedingly rare; suicide still more so; only one or two cases are known to the natives. Delirium tremens has never been seen by Dr. Davidson.

That terrible and loathsome disease, tubercular leprosy, is rather common in Madagascar. During 1862 the number of cases treated at the Mission Dispensary at Antanànarìvo were nearly one hundred. The progress of the disease may be divided into three stages: the first characterised by the appearance of spots, the second by tubercles, and the third by ulceration or falling-off of the members. These three stages may coexist simultaneously in different parts of the body. The symptoms and progress of leprosy, as observed in Madagascar, do not differ materially from what is described by the most ancient writers on the subject. While affecting the skin, hair, and lastly the joints of the limbs, its influence upon the bodily functions, both vital and natural, are by no means so evident or uniform. The organs of respiration and the nervous system seem most usually affected, often accompanied by enfeebled action of the heart, and general depression of the vital powers—all the symptoms becoming more prominent as the disease advances. The unfortunate

victims become at last as helpless to themselves as they are loathsome to those who have to minister to their wants.

Dr. Davidson affirms that there can be no doubt of the hereditary nature of leprosy, and believes that, in *almost* every case, careful inquiry would establish the existence of a transmitted taint. It is difficult to give a positive answer to the inquiry whether leprosy originates *de novo* at the present day, or is spread by contagion. At present there has not been a sufficient number of facts collected to reply. It cannot be highly contagious in the ordinary sense of the word, for husbands are constantly seen suffering from the disease, and yet living for years with their wives without communicating it, and *vice versâ.* And yet it certainly deserves notice, that while the laws of Madagascar excluded leprous persons from society, the disease was kept within bounds; but since this salutary regulation has been suffered to fall into disuse, leprosy has spread to an almost incredible extent.

The originating causes of the disease are a profound mystery. Differences of race, climate, diet, or elevation above the sea-level, furnish no clue to the solution of the problem; for it is found indifferently among all the various tribes, in all ranks of society, and in every part of Madagascar. Probably want of cleanliness in food, dress, and living tend to aggravate and make the disease more inveterate. Leprosy is probably seldom produced *immediately* and at once in any constitution from the causes originating it, but *gradually*, by the persistence of causes operating through successive generations.

In the treatment of this most formidable disease we are still in the dark. Every remedy has been tried, but in vain. The utmost that can be accomplished, in the present state of our knowledge, is to palliate, not cure it. Iodide of potassium has proved of service in a number of cases, and great temporary benefit has been derived from the use of quassia in large doses in the later stages of the disease. External applications of olive-oil to the skin, together with the use of the tepid bath, have given great relief to the patients, although, as already said, none were entirely cured.

For these facts I am indebted to reports by Dr. Davidson, medical missionary at Antanànarìvo, and to papers contributed by him to medical journals in Scotland.

APPENDIX H.

ARTICLES IN THE ANGLO-MALAGASY TREATY REFERRING TO RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND TEACHING, SIGNED AT ANTANÀNARÌVO, JUNE 27, 1865.

"ARTICLE II.—The subjects of Her Britannic Majesty shall have full power to enter into, rent, or lease houses or lands in, trade with, and pass with their merchandise through, all parts of the dominions of her Majesty the Queen of Madagascar which are under the control of a governor duly appointed by the Malagasy authorities, except Ambòhimànga, Ambòhimànambòla, and Ampàrafàravàto;* and they shall enjoy therein all the privileges and advantages with regard to commerce, or with regard to any other matter whatsoever, which are now or may hereafter be granted to, or allowed to be enjoyed by the subjects or citizens of the most favoured nation," etc.

(The above restriction of British subjects from the three sacred towns is now no longer enforced; the renunciation of idolatry by the native government, and the subsequent destruction of the national idols, have effectually removed the sacred character of the three places; while the omission of any such limitation from the French treaty gives freedom of access to us also under the "most-favoured nation" clause of the article.)

"ARTICLE III.—British subjects in the dominions of her Majesty the Queen of Madagascar shall be allowed freely to exercise and teach the Christian religion, and to erect and maintain suitable places of worship. Such places of worship, with their lands and appurtenances, shall, however, be recognised as the property of the Queen of Madagascar, who shall permit them to be applied for ever to the special purposes for which they shall have been built. They shall, in the profession, exercise, and teaching of their religion, receive the protection of the queen and her officers, and shall not be persecuted or interfered with.

"Her Majesty the Queen of Madagascar, from her friendship for Her Britannic Majesty, promises to grant full religious liberty to all her subjects, and not to persecute or molest any subjects or natives

* See page 172.

of Madagascar on account of their embracing or exercising the Christian religion. But should any of her subjects professing Christianity be found guilty of any criminal offence, the action of the law of the land shall not be interfered with."

"ARTICLE XVIII.—Her Majesty the Queen of Madagascar engages to abolish trial by the ordeal of poison."

By Article XVII. right is accorded to British cruisers to search any Malagasy or Arab vessel suspected of being engaged in the slave-trade, and to treat such vessels, if guilty, as pirates. As the Malagasy have at present no shipping, the above provision is made for the purpose of preventing the slave-traffic still carried on from the north-west ports in Arab dhows.

Some doubt having arisen as to the bearing of Article III. on the possession and use of the Memorial Churches, the following official paper was procured from the native government through the British consul:—

"In accordance with the meaning of Article III. of the English treaty with the Malagasy, the churches to be built by the missionaries of the London Missionary Society at Fàravòhitra, Ambàtonakànga, Ampàmarìnana, Ambòhipòtsy, and Fiadana, shall be put aside by the sovereign of Madagascar for the teaching and worship of those missionaries, and for the Malagasy who unite in the same worship with them, and for their successors for ever. And the sovereign shall set apart and protect those churches, and not permit them to be used for worship by persons who do not unite with them, and whose worship is not the same as the worship of those who built them.

"Nevertheless, in reference to those churches, it shall be agreed to be said that they belong to the sovereign of Madagascar, and the London Missionary Society shall have no claim for repayment of the money spent, little or much, in the building of those churches, for they belong to the sovereign in the manner above stated for ever."

The above document was signed by the chief secretary of state and another officer of the native government, and certified by T. C. Pakenham, Esq., H.B.M.'s Consul for Madagascar, and sealed with their respective seals.

APPENDIX I.

List of Books upon Madagascar.

For the information of those who may desire to study the history of Madagascar more in detail, I append a list of all the works and separate papers with which I am acquainted which have been written respecting the country or its people:—

History of Madagascar. By Copland.
Histoire de Madagascar. Par Flacourt.
Life of Benyowski.
The Adventures of Robert Drury during Fifteen Years' Captivity on the Island of Madagascar; containing a Description of that Island; an Account of its Produce, Manufactures, and Commerce; with an Account of the Manners and Customs, Wars, and Civil Policy of its Inhabitants; to which is added a Vocabulary of the Madagascar Language. London, 1728–43.
Voyage to Madagascar and the East Indies. By the Abbé Rochon. Translated from the French. London, 1793.

This book is written in a most humane and enlightened spirit. The author does not hesitate to denounce the cruelty and political folly of the various attempts made by his countrymen to form colonies in the island. It contains much information upon the botany of the country, and is illustrated with a curious map.

The Widowed Missionary's Journal, containing some Account of Madagascar; and also a Narrative of the Missionary Career of the Rev. J. Jeffreys. By Keturah Jeffreys. Southampton, 1827.
History of Madagascar. Compiled chiefly from original documents, by Rev. Wm. Ellis. With maps and drawings. London, 1838.

This book is, without doubt, the most authentic and complete account of the country and its inhabitants yet published. It has been the storehouse from which most sketches of the island have been derived.

A Narrative of the Persecutions of the Christians in Madagascar, with Details of the Escape of the Six Refugees now in England. By Revds. J. J. Freeman and David Johns. London, 1840.
Madagascar, Past and Present; with Considerations as to the Political and Commercial Relations of England and France, and as to the Progress of Christian Civilisation. By a Resident. Lond. 1847.

Three Visits to Madagascar during the Years 1853, 1854, and 1856; including a Journey to the Capital; with Notices of the Natural History of the Country, and of the Present Civilisation of the People. By Rev. Wm. Ellis. Illustrated. London, 1859.

The Last Travels of Ida Pfeiffer; inclusive of a Visit to Madagascar. Translated by H. W. Dulcken, Ph.D. London, 1861.

Strongly coloured by French views of the country and people, with a *naïve* revelation of the French plot to dethrone Rànavàlona I.

Madagascar: its Missions and its Martyrs. By the Rev. E. Prout. London, 1862.

Madagascar and the Malagasy; with Sketches in the Provinces of Tamatave, Bétanimena, and Ankòva. By Lieut. S. P. Oliver, R.A. Illustrations in chromolithography. London, 1863.

Madagascar: its Social and Religious Progress. By Mrs. Ellis. London, 1863.

Madagascar Revisited; describing the Events of a New Reign and the Revolution which followed. By Rev. William Ellis. Illustrated. London, 1867.

The Martyr Church: a Record of the Introduction, Persecutions, and Triumph of Christianity in Madagascar. By Rev. William Ellis. Illustrated. London, 1869.

Philological.

A Dictionary of the Malagasy Language. In Two Parts: English–Malagasy, by Rev. J. J. Freeman; Malagasy–English, by Rev. D. Johns; assisted by native Malagasy. Antanànarìvo, 1835.

A Grammar of the Malagasy Language in the Ankòva Dialect. By the Rev. David Griffiths. Woodbridge, 1854.

An Outline of a Grammar of the Malagasy Language, as spoken by the Hovas. By E. Baker. Port Louis, 1845; London, 1864.

Pamphlets.

A Boat Voyage along the Coast Lakes of East Madagascar. By Capt. W. Rooke. Read before Geographical Society, Dec. 1865.

A Visit to the North-East Provinces of Madagascar. By Rev. H Maundrell. Read before Royal Geographical Society, Jan. 1867.

Tubercular Leprosy in Madagascar. By Dr. A. Davidson, Medical Missionary. Edinburgh, 1864.

Choreomania: an Historical Sketch. With Account of an Epidemic observed in Madagascar. By Dr. A. Davidson. Edinburgh, 1867.
Chronicle of the London Missionary Society. 1812–1869.
Church Missionary Intelligencer. 1863–1869.
The Mission Field (S.P.G.). 1863–1869.
Annuals of the Propagation of the Faith (Rom. Cath.). 1862–1869.

French Works.

Trois Mois de séjour à Madagascar. Par le Capitain Dupré. Avec carte de l'île. Paris, 1863.
Madagascar et les Madécasses. Histoire, Mœurs, Productions, Curiosités naturelles. Par Octave Sachot. Paris, 1864.

This book is chiefly fouuded upon Mr. Ellis's "Three Visits," with much additional information from French sources, and corrections and cautions from a French point of view. The following French books on the island are referred to:—

Histoire et Géographie de Madagascar. Par Macé-Descartes.
Madagascar, Possession française depuis 1642. (!) Par V. A. Barbié du Bocage. Paris, 1858.
Connaissance de Madagascar. Par Louis Lacaille. Paris, 1862.
Notice Historique sur Madagascar. Par Francis Riaux.
Histoire de l'établissement française de Madagascar. Par L. Carayon.
Documents sur l'histoire de Madagascar. Par M. Guillain.
La Relation du Doct. Milhet-Fontarabie. Revue Algérienne. 1860.
Voyage à Madagascar, et aux Iles Comores. Par L. de Lacombe.
Madagascar et le Roi Radàma II. Par R. P. H. de Régnon. Paris, 1863.
Notes sur Madagascar. Par M. Albrand. 1844.
Colonization de Madagascar. Par Désiré Laverdant. Paris, 1844.
Notice historique et géographique. Par Eugéne de Froberville.
Relation du Voyage à Tanànarìvo. Par le T. R. P. Jouen.
Madagascar à vol d'oiseau. Par M. Désiré Charnay. Paris, 1864.

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